

# TRENDS IN ADULT LEARNING

## IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN



Report drafted within the framework of the Education and Training for Employment (MEDA-ETE) project implemented by the European Training Foundation between 2005 and 2009 on behalf of the European Commission. The project involved 10 southern Mediterranean partner countries and was aimed at upgrading the national technical and vocational education and training systems through exchanges, peer learning and pilot initiatives.

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SUMMARY REPORT PREPARED BY JEAN GORDON, EUROPEAN  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL POLICY AND  
JEAN-MARC CASTEJON (EDITOR), ETF  
2011

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 OBJECTIVES AND KEY MESSAGES OF THE REPORT

This is the summary report for the study commissioned by the European Training Foundation (ETF) on adult learning in seven South Mediterranean partner countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia. The report does not claim to provide an exhaustive inventory. Its aim is the more modest one of giving an account of recent developments in the field of adult learning in the region, and examining to what extent public policies on the one hand and the private sector on the other contribute to these developments. The study was concerned with both employed and unemployed people. This summary report is intended for all institutional actors who are dealing with the demand for and the provision of adult learning in the region, both public and private. It seeks to help to bridge the gap that exists in terms of the information that is available on adult learning initiatives in the region. As the country reports amply show, reliable information is scarce. But recent events in the Mediterranean region shed new light on the importance of adult learning, especially as a social demand. It is too early to see whether and how this demand will be met, but this report intends to contribute by providing a number of suggestions as to how this could be achieved.

In all the countries included in the study there are substantial economic and social reforms under way that create important challenges for adult education policies and provision. A number of major concerns are common to all these countries, though they may be of differing importance. The pressure of demographics in the region is substantial, with high percentages of the population under the age of 15 years. In all the countries the implicit definition of 'adult' (i.e. in terms of the provision of education and training) includes young people over the age of 15 years. In addition to the size of the youth population, the increase in the number of students entering secondary and higher education creates a major challenge for governments, sectors and enterprises. Within this overall increase, the number and proportion of female graduates have also increased. Countries are having difficulty in increasing the activity rate of women and in improving employment opportunities for women in line with their qualifications. However, the majority of workers in the region (60–70%) have only primary education or less, which creates a substantial challenge to continuing education and training systems in terms of their ability to adequately support economic and social development. While girls are performing increasingly well in education systems, the literacy rate of women in the region is lower than that for men, and more girls than boys do not go to school (or leave early). Improving the literacy rate for children and adults remains a concern, and will have an influence on priorities for adult learning, since it affects both the absolute literacy rates and functional literacy for skills training.

One barrier to the development of adult learning is that it is not seen as a priority in the region. With regard to adult learning within employment, only large companies give the necessary attention to this area because they clearly perceive the added value of a skilled workforce and of high-quality training. For unemployed people, the training provided through active labour market measures is not sufficient in either quantity or quality to be significant in combating unemployment. Faced with the challenges of high rates of adult illiteracy, most countries have initiated ambitious non-formal adult education programmes targeting those who have benefited from formal instruction and those who left it early. Most countries in the region have made substantial progress in reducing illiteracy, though it remains a significant problem, and adult education consists of isolated initiatives that are not integrated into a lifelong learning perspective.

## 1.2 METHODOLOGY

The ETF commissioned a set of country reports and a summary report. The country reports were drafted by national consultants<sup>1</sup> using a set of common guidelines that were agreed with the ETF and with the consultants. This summary report uses the data gathered by the country reports, which were reviewed at their draft stage by the relevant ETF country managers.

The report is organised around three pillars according to the population targeted, namely education and training provision (i) for people in employment; (ii) for unemployed people; and (iii) undertaken at individuals' own initiative. There are clearly some overlaps between these categories. In addition to providing basic information, the country reports focus on trends in each of the countries, so the definition of the scope has been kept broad in order to ensure that the reports can capture the most important information for each country. In addition to describing both policy and practice, with a view to understanding government policy as fully as possible, authors were asked to select sectors that are important for the national economy and that have a particularly well-developed or innovative approach to training.

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<sup>1</sup> Algeria: Hamid Belhabbib; Egypt: Atef Aly; Jordan: Manar Shawareb; Lebanon: Bourhan Kreitem; Morocco: Aomar Ibourek; Syria: Anton Al-Jouni; and Tunisia: Abderrazak Bousselem.

This report aims to summarise the key information and data contained in the country reports with the aim of drawing out the common issues and characteristics, the similar and/or different challenges, and recommendations for policy focus. In order to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the education and training provided, the reports were structured around a set of questions that are listed in Annex 1. Given the absence of systematic quantitative data, the report does not include regional figures on the numbers of adults involved in the different types of education and training, since the data would not be sufficiently reliable for any further comparative or policy purposes. Some quantitative data is included for certain countries and types of provision where it is available on a case-by-case basis.

Kreitem (2010) emphasises that adult education as it has been defined for this study (see below) is fragmented between several ministerial departments and other institutional actors in both the public and private sectors. This fragmentation of training provision has an effect on the structure and content of the statistical system, which is also fragmented, and has no overall coherence. Each government department or institution develops its own ad hoc system for collecting data, based mainly on partial or one-off activities.

## 1.3 WORKING DEFINITION AND SCOPE OF ADULT EDUCATION

Before presenting the data, it is useful to look at some of the definitions of adult education and adult learning that are commonly in use, and their scope.

In European Commission (2006), adult learning is defined as ‘all forms of learning undertaken by adults after having left initial education and training’.

The Commission document places adult learning in the context of the acquisition of key competences, employability, mobility and social inclusion. Despite differences of context between the EU member states, one of the major challenges for adult learning in the EU is fighting poverty and social exclusion, which are affected by low levels of initial education, unemployment, rural isolation and reduced life chances relating to a wide range of factors. According to the report, not only does this situation marginalise individuals and exclude them from active citizenship, but new forms of illiteracy (e.g. access to and use of information and communication technology (ICT) in professional and daily life) exacerbate this exclusion. Adult learning is seen as having a key role to play in responding to social exclusion, helping adults to become more efficient workers and better-informed and more active citizens, and also contributing to their personal well-being. The EU’s New Skill for New Jobs initiative also refers to the need for more information, which will lead to better matching between skills and labour market needs. This is clearly echoed in the situations in the Mediterranean partner countries included in this study.

In the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, those that relate directly to adult education focus on ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are equitably met, and this includes reducing adult illiteracy rates by 50% by 2015. This focus on literacy is certainly important in all the reports drafted for this ETF study, though it is not the only factor highlighted.

The ETF’s work on adult learning is based on the EU definition, but with an emphasis on employment. For example, in the report on adult learning in Southern Europe (Gunny and Viertel, 2006) the emphasis is on the skills that people need in order to adapt and remain employable in the open market and the employability skills that help individuals to move out of unemployment and marginal employment. For the purposes of this study, the definition in the EU Communication is useful in that it is suitably broad, encompassing all forms of learning. This approach corresponds to the terms of reference of the study, which focus on the type of population targeted: employed learners, unemployed learners, and individuals undertaking learning on their own initiative. The country reports do not explicitly state a definition, but the existing provision in the countries gives some implicit indications of the scope. The following are characteristics of public policy for ‘adult’ learning in all of the countries.

1. Improving literacy rates of adults and eradicating illiteracy is a preoccupation in all countries, though the extent varies according to the illiteracy rate among the population aged 15 years and over.
2. Adult learning has to address many problems created by the fact that some children in these countries either do not attend primary education, or leave school before the end of the primary cycle. This means that there is a large, very young population, from the age of about 15 years old and upwards (or in some cases younger) that falls within the scope of ‘adult’ learning. The functional literacy gap must be dealt with before further training can take place.
3. Given both the percentage of young people in the overall population and the numbers graduating from higher education, the proportion of young, qualified unemployed people is comparatively high and creates a critical focus for adult education initiatives and measures.

## 1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report is organised in a similar way to the country reports, focusing on different groups of beneficiaries of adult education. Chapter 2 presents a brief introduction to the national contexts and major issues. Chapter 3 examines the education and training provided for employed people in each country. Chapter 4 focuses on education and training for unemployed people, and Chapter 5 presents education and training that is available to be undertaken on individuals' own initiative. In each of these three chapters data is presented by theme, including illustrative country examples; at the end of each chapter there is a synthesis of the main issues and obstacles encountered. Chapter 6 presents a summary of the issues from the three main chapters and suggests recommendations for addressing key challenges.

## 2. BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

This chapter presents the key features identified by national reports as challenges for the development of adult learning in the region. It then describes the national policies that address these common challenges.

### 2.1 KEY CHALLENGES

#### Demographic pressure

All the countries concerned (except Tunisia) are still experiencing rapid population growth and have an age profile that includes a higher percentage of young people than EU countries or North America (Gunny and Viertel, 2006). Jordan, for example, is a young society with 37.3% of the population under the age of 15. The population has doubled since 1980 and is expected to continue growing and to double again in the next 30 years. **TABLE 2.1**, which shows the percentage of the population under the age of 15, illustrates the extent of the challenge faced by governments in their education and training policies.

**TABLE 2.1 POPULATION AGED UNDER 15 YEARS (%)**

| Country | Percentage of population under 15 |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| Algeria | 28.4                              |
| Egypt   | 37.7                              |
| Jordan  | 37.3                              |
| Lebanon | 27.2                              |
| Morocco | 30.0                              |
| Syria   | 39.5                              |
| Tunisia | 25.6                              |

*The figures are for 2006, except for Lebanon (2004).*

*Source: MEDSTAT II publication, Detape and Kagan, 2008*

#### BOX 2.1 THE EGYPTIAN CASE

There has been rapid growth in the working-age population in Egypt, and this trend will continue, since 32% of the population is in the age group 15–29 years, and another third is in the age group 0–14 years. It was estimated that between 2005 and 2010, 790 000 individuals would enter the labour market every year, creating an annual growth rate of over 5% of the active population. Furthermore, estimates suggest that around 80% of those who are unemployed are in the 15–24 age group. Providing post-primary education and training for the high number of individuals who do not progress into secondary education, and for those who leave before completing it, is a major issue. Enrolment rates for females in secondary education are low. The majority of school graduates in Egypt are in the technical secondary schools (TSS), and another major challenge is to improve the quality of provision and the perception by the population of the value of TSS diplomas.

The demographic pressures have a very substantial effect on the labour market situation, on policy formulation for adult training and on the use of resources. But the problem is particularly acute for higher education graduates, whose overall number is rising. Also increasing is the percentage of young women graduating from higher education, which is 50–60% of the total number of graduates in all the countries included in this report except Morocco (42%). In Morocco young graduates are the most vulnerable category on the labour market, with an unemployment rate of over 25%.

## High unemployment and the rise of the informal sector

In most of these countries a large proportion of the workforce works in agriculture and small enterprises in trades and services. The formal labour market is relatively small and tends to be dominated by the state, though this is slowly changing. The exception is Tunisia, which has a well-developed private sector (Leney, 2009). While the labour force supply is increasing, activity and employment rates show a decreasing trend, with average unemployment rates around 15%, although in all the countries they are much higher for young people. In Tunisia 90% of unemployed individuals are between the ages of 15 and 39 years, and the largest group is made up of adults with secondary or higher education. This last group is increasing in size. In Egypt labour market participation is low at 47.6%, but the female participation rate is only 21.3%. This figure does not take account of the informal sector and unpaid work.

In Egypt, partly as a result of the phasing out of guaranteed employment in the public sector for higher education graduates, it is estimated that employment in the informal economy is growing, especially among young people, and in particular for women. Since public sector employment is shrinking, this is affecting women in particular, since those who are in the labour market tend to be employed in the public sector. This is resulting in a decrease in the participation rate for well-educated women. In Syria men account for 83% of the total labour force. Whereas most of those in production employment are men, there are a high number of women in professional positions.

In contrast to the growing young, well-educated population, the majority of workers in the region (60–70%) have only primary education or less, which creates a substantial challenge for continuing education and training systems if they are to adequately support economic development. In Syria just under 60% of the workforce has only basic education, and there is high unemployment among this group. The majority of Syrian families need to send their children to work immediately after primary education so that they can contribute financially to the family. However, a decrease in employment for this category also indicates changes in labour market needs and in the economy. An illustration of the skills profile pyramid is provided by Tunisia, where in 2004 low-skilled workers represented 57% of the workforce, medium-skilled workers 31%, and high-skilled workers 12% (Leney, 2009).

With the decrease in public sector employment in favour of the private sector, changes are also taking place in the share of gross national product (GNP) accounted for by different sectors. As the MEDA-ETE summary report notes (ETF, 2009), while the public sector is still a common transition destination for young people, albeit in decreasing numbers, the transition to the private sector is marked by an increase in the informal sector. This appears to correspond partly to well-documented aspirations to public sector employment; the private sector (formal or informal) has tended to be a transition stage for individuals awaiting a coveted job in the public sector.

## Illiteracy and the gender gap in learning

The issue of illiteracy is underlined to some degree in every country report. A recent regional report written for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Institute of Lifelong Learning (Yousif, 2009) discusses the state of literacy across the region, since this is a critical issue. The report summarises the context and major issues affecting adult education in the Arab region, and although it includes more countries than the current document, it provides a useful background to the literacy challenge.

According to the report, 'more than 6 million children of school age (about 10 million according to some sources) are out of school. About 60% of them are girls. Nearly two-thirds of these children have never been enrolled in school, and about 13% have left school early. There are many reasons behind non-enrolment of these children, including shortage of school space, poverty, gender, tradition, parents' lack of education, and place of residence (8.7% of those children live in rural areas).' The report also states that some 65 million adults are illiterate (some sources put the figure at between 58 and 61 million), two-thirds of whom are women. An estimated 10 million of 6–15-year-olds do not attend school.

On average, only two-thirds of adults across the Arab states can read and write with understanding, though there was an increase in the literacy rate of around 16% between 1999 and the period 2000–04. However, literacy rates vary from one country to another. They are, for example, below 60% in Morocco and Egypt but around 90% or above in Jordan and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The report goes on to say that in 2004 more than two-thirds of illiterate adults were women. The Moroccan report emphasises that illiteracy remains a major issue for the country, since it concerns almost 40% of the population over the age of 10, though rates are much higher in rural areas and for women.

**TABLE 2.2** clearly illustrates these disparities.

**TABLE 2.2 ACTIVE POPULATION BY EDUCATION LEVEL IN MOROCCO (%)**

| Education level          | Active population |       |       |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
|                          | Urban             | Rural | Total |
| No recognised level      | 18.9              | 53.9  | 36.9  |
| Koranic/pre-school level | 3.6               | 6.5   | 5.1   |
| Total of low levels      | 22.5              | 60.4  | 42.0  |

Source: Morocco country report

**BOX 2.2 LITERACY IN EGYPT**

During the 10-year period between 1996 and 2006 the adult literacy rate increased from 44.4% to 71.4% as a result of several measures, including reducing the drop-out rate from education by providing more educational opportunities for all children in Egypt, and improving early childhood programmes. In addition, programmes are being developed for the 15–35 age group, with a specific focus on women and the governorates of Upper Egypt. The National Plan for Literacy aims to deal with the issue of recurring illiteracy, following cooperation with UNESCO on the Education for All goals. It should be noted that illiteracy rates in rural areas and for women are higher than the national average. It is estimated that the literacy rate for adults in rural areas is around 50% and that for women overall is around 59.7%.

Source: Aly, 2010

As shown in **TABLE 2.3**, there are substantial differences in the activity rates for men and women in the working population in the countries concerned. There are, of course, no figures available for participation in the informal sector. Given the importance of the informal sector, especially in rural areas, it is difficult to ascertain the true activity rate for women, including for both paid and unpaid labour. Since illiteracy rates for women are higher than those for men, these figures do highlight the importance of efforts relating to adult education for women in supporting economic and social development.

**TABLE 2.3 MALE AND FEMALE ACTIVITY RATES (%)**

| Country | Activity rates |        |
|---------|----------------|--------|
|         | Male           | Female |
| Algeria | 69.9           | 14.9   |
| Egypt   | 75.1           | 23.6   |
| Jordan  | 63.1           | 11.9   |
| Lebanon | 73.4           | 22.3   |
| Morocco | 76.4           | 27.2   |
| Syria   | 72.8           | 14.5   |
| Tunisia | 73.8           | 27.2   |

The figures are for 2006, except for Lebanon (2004).

Source: MEDSTAT II publication, Detape and Kagan, 2008

**TABLE 2.4** shows the adult (15 years and over) literacy rates in the countries concerned. The figures given in the country reports for this study are in some cases higher than those shown in this table as improvements have been achieved through policies aimed at tackling adult illiteracy. In all the countries for which there are data, the literacy rate is lower for females than for males, with very large differences of around 20 percentage points or more in all the countries except Jordan. (It should be noted that no data were available for Lebanon for this UNESCO study.) The fourth column shows the literacy rate for 15–24-year-olds, which in all cases is higher than the rate for the total population over the age of 15, demonstrating the progress that has been made in primary education. In part it also illustrates the way in which the focus for adult education will continue to shift from functional literacy (except for women) to other labour market issues.

**TABLE 2.4 ADULT (15+) LITERACY RATES, 2000–04 (%)**

| Country | Literacy rates |        |           |             |
|---------|----------------|--------|-----------|-------------|
|         | Male           | Female | Total 15+ | Total 15–24 |
| Algeria | 79.5           | 60.1   | 69.8      | 90.1        |
| Egypt   | 67.2           | 43.6   | 55.6      | 73.2        |
| Jordan  | 95.1           | 84.7   | 89.9      | 99.1        |
| Lebanon | n/a            | n/a    | n/a       | n/a         |
| Morocco | 63.3           | 38.3   | 50.7      | 69.5        |
| Syria   | 91.0           | 74.2   | 82.9      | 95.2        |
| Tunisia | 83.4           | 65.3   | 74.3      | 94.3        |

*n/a: not available*  
*Source: Yousif, 2009*

## Difficult transition from school to work

All the national reports include data showing that the integration of young people into the labour market is a major challenge for adult education policies. In four of the countries (Algeria, Jordan, Morocco and Syria) over half the females in the 15–24 age group are not enrolled in education or training and are not classed as unemployed. In all the countries apart from Egypt, only a very small percentage of females (3–6%) are declared as unemployed. The employment and enrolment rates vary considerably among the countries. In all the countries the percentage of males who are not enrolled in education or training, and are not classed as unemployed is much lower than for females. In all these countries the largest percentage of males is those who are either enrolled in education or employed. The extent of the problem is well illustrated in **TABLE 2.5**.

Some of the future challenges are summarised in the MEDSTAT II publication (Detape and Kagan, 2008) as follows:

- integrating young people who are increasingly well-educated into a production system that offers more modern and higher-valued jobs;
- combating the rural exodus by reducing the number of people working in agriculture;
- improving access to the labour market for young women and ensuring that they participate fully in economic activity.

Morocco provides a good illustration of the difficult transition from school to work (see **BOX 2.3**).

**TABLE 2.5 YOUNG PEOPLE (15–24) BY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS (%)**

| Status             | Algeria | Egypt | Jordan | Lebanon | Morocco | Syria | Tunisia |
|--------------------|---------|-------|--------|---------|---------|-------|---------|
| <b>TOTAL</b>       |         |       |        |         |         |       |         |
| Unemployed         | 7.2     | 12.4  | 9.4    | 6.7     | 6.7     | 6.3   | 10.2    |
| Employed           | 22.7    | 23.9  | 16.4   | 23.7    | 35.9    | 27.4  | 22.6    |
| Enrolled at school | 29.5    | 45.1  | 36.8   | 45.5    | 18.9    | 17.8  | 45.8    |
| Other              | 40.6    | 18.6  | 37.4   | 24.1    | 38.5    | 48.5  | 21.4    |
| <b>MALE</b>        |         |       |        |         |         |       |         |
| Unemployed         | 11.5    | 11.7  | 15.3   | 9.2     | 9.9     | 7.9   | 13.9    |
| Employed           | 38.9    | 38.6  | 27.9   | 32.1    | 51.2    | 44.5  | 30.0    |
| Enrolled at school | 25.9    | 46.2  | 37.1   | 40.6    | 20.3    | 19.5  | 41.1    |
| Other              | 23.7    | 3.5   | 19.7   | 18.1    | 18.6    | 28.1  | 15.0    |
| <b>FEMALE</b>      |         |       |        |         |         |       |         |
| Unemployed         | 3.0     | 13.0  | 3.8    | 3.9     | 3.4     | 4.4   | 6.6     |
| Employed           | 6.4     | 7.9   | 5.6    | 14.1    | 20.0    | 8.0   | 15.1    |
| Enrolled at school | 33.1    | 44.1  | 36.4   | 51.0    | 17.5    | 16.0  | 50.4    |
| Other              | 57.5    | 35.0  | 54.2   | 31.0    | 59.1    | 71.6  | 27.9    |

Source: MEDSTAT II publication, Detape and Kagan, 2008

### BOX 2.3 TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK IN MOROCCO

The unemployment rate by education level illustrates the problems of graduates in accessing the labour market. Unemployment increases with attainment level, and has the greatest effect on:

1. graduates from higher and secondary education;
2. young people aged 15–24 years seeking their first job;
3. female graduates with a first or post-graduate between the ages of 25 and 34;
4. graduates from universities, who had an unemployment rate of 27.6% in 2008 (except for the Faculty of Medicine), compared with graduates from the 'grandes écoles' and higher education institutes (instituts supérieurs) for whom the unemployment rate was only 3.4%.

Source: ETF, 2010d, p. 17

## 2.2 NATIONAL POLICIES

Each country in the region has designed national policies to address these challenges, adapting the focus to the national context. The problem is that these policies are not always implemented efficiently and their effect is not always measured. National policies are in many cases supported by donors, and in particular by the EU. Annex 3 provides an overview of the main policy documents dealing with adult learning in the countries.

At one end of the spectrum, Morocco (like Tunisia) provides an example of how relations with the EU have contributed to strategic choices. Important structural and macroeconomic reforms have been undertaken over recent decades. The integration of Morocco into free exchange zones, major investment projects and the awarding of EU associated partner status have been significant factors in moving forward the development strategy. However, what is considered in the country report to be a backlog of deficits in education is making it difficult to make the best of the potential offered by the country's large young population.

A somewhat different approach in Jordan has emphasised the establishment of a major 10-year reform plan, the National Agenda 2007–17, which includes eight core areas for which objectives have been set: political development; legislation and justice; investment; financial reform; employment and vocational training; social prosperity; higher education and scientific research; and upgrading the infrastructure. Education, training and employment are integrated into different areas and the reforms in these fields will be influenced by this national strategic development plan. The National Agenda has set targets for reducing unemployment, which is officially 12% (but is higher for young people and women), and for strengthening the links between training provision and the needs of the labour market. The first phase has focused on attracting investments to labour-intensive employment areas and recruiting 60% of the labour needed from the unemployed population. The Torino Process report for Jordan states that ‘the concept of lifelong learning as stated in the E-TVET vision has not yet led to the development of a coherent system of continuing education that could respond to the training and up-skilling needs of the labour force and the private sector’ (ETF, 2010b, p. 6).

Neighbouring Syria is also working through a national strategy, the 10th Five-Year Plan, which includes economic reform; social justice; restructuring of the public sector; the rationalisation of government support; investment activation; development of the financial and monetary sector; administrative reform; improvements in the income and training of government employees; and an increase in work efficiency.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is Lebanon, where the situation is extreme and is strongly affected both by the long civil war and the conflict with Israel. In the 1990s profound political and economic changes took place, and these have had an impact on human development in the country. Kreitem (2010) emphasises the overlap between the geographies of poverty, the geographies of conflict and the lack of global vision in the development of human resources in countries where religious divisions block serious reforms. As a result of institutional weaknesses and the absence of clear strategies, public, private and third sector initiatives are limited in terms of their scope and their relevance to target groups, enterprises and labour market needs (ETF, 2010c, p. 8). The most vulnerable groups are female heads of households, working children, elderly people, individuals with a disability, agricultural workers, workers in the fishing industry and unemployed people. The country lacks a long-term social development vision and the problems are compounded by a highly politicised approach to the issues and by the multiplicity of actors (Kreitem, 2010). It is not surprising that the most prominent initiative is the literacy programme led by the National Committee for Illiteracy and Adult Education (NCIAE), which has 24 393 participants, 6 112 of whom are women (ETF, 2010c). However, the bulk of adult education is left to private sector and civil society institutions, supported in many cases by international organisations.

National policies seem to be a reflection of the institutional setting: weak systems such as the one in Lebanon prevent the implementation of appropriate arrangements, whereas strong systems such as the one in Morocco allow for real policy measures to be implemented.

## 2.3 MAIN ISSUES

The major concerns relating to the contexts in the seven countries are listed below.

- Demographic pressures are substantial, with the large number of people in the population aged under 15 being one indicator of this. Such quantitative problems require relevant measures in line with the corresponding social demand for learning.
- Unemployment rates are high, especially those for young graduates, and for women who have not received relevant education and training. As a result the informal sector is flourishing as a buffer between education and formal employment. The level of job creation is simply not sufficient to absorb the number of job seekers, despite generally sustained GNP growth throughout the region. Active labour market measures, robust as they may be in some cases, are not efficient enough to combat unemployment on a large scale.
- Transition from school to work is difficult because of the increase in the number of graduates whose training is not related to labour market needs, and because economies are not creating enough jobs.
- Improving the literacy rate remains a concern, and relates to both the absolute literacy rates and functional literacy for skills training. The illiteracy rate for women is higher than that for men, which highlights the importance of efforts towards adult education for women to support both their personal development and the economic and social development of their communities.
- National policies have been formulated, but the number of students is overwhelming. The main problem is that the impact of these policies is not evaluated (except in Morocco, where the progress of education and TVET is being reviewed against the 2000 *Charte de l'éducation*).

### 3. EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EMPLOYMENT

This chapter is divided into eight sections, with the first presenting examples of institutional arrangements to support training. How the public and private sectors fund, organise and implement training are then examined, including – for the private sector – examples of key sectors and enterprises. The contributions of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry are then highlighted, and this is followed by some examples of arrangements and issues concerning the recognition of qualifications and the quality of the provision. The last sections consider the obstacles to the development of training and present a summary of the main issues.

#### 3.1 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO SUPPORT TRAINING IN EMPLOYMENT

The institutional arrangements to support training are particularly well developed in the Maghreb countries, and this is illustrated by two examples – Tunisia and Algeria. Such arrangements concern staff in both public and private sector employment. The example of Morocco is presented in Section 3.3 on the private sector. The third example included here focuses on Egypt, where a process is under way to structure institutional arrangements in the training sector. Jordan is the final example mentioned in this chapter.

In Tunisia the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment is responsible for steering all continuing education and training through the Centre national de formation continue et de promotion professionnelle (CNFCPP) for the industrial and services sectors. Continuing education and training is the responsibility of the CNFCPP, whose mission is to implement training programmes to support professional development; to allow individuals to progress in training to a higher level; to provide conversion training for employees who have lost their jobs or are likely to do so; and to support enterprises through programmes to support training and quality. The CNFCPP works with both the public sector and private enterprises, making available a number of funding instruments for training, both through the central services and regional offices through the Instituts de la promotion supérieure du travail and through partnerships with other organisations.

The funding instruments are as follows:

- rebates on the professional tax;
- funding for the national training programme;
- funding for training through the financing of technological investment.

Enterprises in Tunisia pay a tax for vocational training that is 1% of the annual salary bill for manufacturing enterprises and 2% for other firms. Expenditure by the enterprise for the purposes of training staff can be deducted from this tax. The national training programme addresses the needs of small enterprises employing fewer than 100 staff. Since these instruments were introduced in the mid 1990s there has been considerable increase in the uptake in terms of the number of enterprises and the amounts of spending. The number of beneficiary enterprises has increased from just over 1 200 in 1995 to 5 750 in 2008, and there has been a parallel increase in the number of individuals receiving training, from just over 57 000 in 1996 to over 190 000 in 2008. However, the increases have been greatest for the first two of the instruments listed. The third instrument, which is focused on innovation, has been less effective. Bousselmi (2010) suggests that this may be due to the complexity of the procedures.

In Algeria continuing training that aims to increase industrial competitiveness by improving individual and collective competences is the responsibility of different ministries and enterprises, and covers different types of provision, such as work-based training, evening classes and skills training. Training undertaken within the official provision leads to either a recognised diploma or the qualification (skills) necessary for a particular type of employment. This would include updating the skills of certain employment fields such as maintenance, business skills for entrepreneurs, ICT skills, and training in the use of the new financial accounting system. Training is provided and organised by a range of different types of organisations, such as public and private education and training institutions, higher education and training institutions, the training centres of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Trades and Agriculture, and the training centres that come under professional bodies. In addition to the state budget, training is funded either by enterprises through their annual training plan or by the National Fund for the Development of Apprenticeship and Continuing Training (Fonds national de développement de l'apprentissage et de la formation continue (FNAC)), to which enterprises contribute the equivalent of 1% of their annual salary bill. This fund has been in operation for 10 years, though it can not be said to have found its intended beneficiaries, mainly as a result of a lack of management and communication capacities. There is also a Sectoral Development Fund (Fonds sectoriel de développement).

A number of programmes have also been established to encourage investment in enterprise creation. In future years this stimulus will focus on the energy sector, which is to be opened up. The national five-year plan (2009–14) includes the establishment of 200 000 new enterprises, which will generate substantial needs in terms of training. These programmes are operated through national agencies that support investment, youth employment, micro credits and social development. Under the provisions of the programmes, for the initial period the training needed to launch new enterprises will be covered completely by the relevant programme.

The third example presented here is Egypt. The situation is complex, given the large population, the high illiteracy rate (especially in rural areas and among women), and the low level of qualifications among the working population. Furthermore, 26 ministries have responsibilities for training. It is hoped that structuring institutional arrangements will contribute to an increase in the number of adults who are able to undertake training. The country report lists the intermediate bodies that have a responsibility for training at a sector or national level.

- The Industrial Training Council was established in 2006 under the responsibility of the Ministry of Industry and Trade in order to coordinate the various training programmes funded by government and donor funding. It is also responsible for the implementation of the National Skills Standards Project (NSSP) and for the reform of the Productivity and Vocational Training Department. Since 2007 two other Human Resource Development Councils have been established for construction (the Building and Construction Training Council) and tourism.
- The Supreme Council for Human Resource Development is the only body in which all stakeholders, including the social partners, are represented. A process is under way to revitalise this body. It is currently the responsibility of the prime minister, but in practice it is chaired by the Minister for Manpower and Migration.
- Since 2003 a National Training Fund has been operating, raising contributions from employers and employees (employers pay only 1% of net profit) to finance continuing training. However, 'shortly after it started collecting revenues, an issue of unconstitutionality of the Fund was legally raised which interrupted its operations' (ETF, 2010b, p. 18).
- During the past decade several donor-funded programmes have been developed (National Programme for Youth Training, Enterprise and Training Partnerships (EU) and the Skills Development Programme) with the aim of developing training for a range of key sectors. There has been a general trend to move towards competence-based programmes and to improve the quality of programmes, which nevertheless remain supply driven.
- In Jordan the Employment-Technical and Vocational Education and Training (E-TVET) Fund was established in 2009 to improve the efficiency and quality of demand-driven, technical skills in collaboration with the private sector. This training is intended to increase employment opportunities for all, including women and individuals with special needs. Given its current and medium-term financial situation (it is currently heading towards huge deficits), the E-TVET Fund is unlikely to be able to reach its goals and attain financial viability. The fund has concentrated its resources on a limited number of projects that were mostly related to activities of the Ministry of Labour (mainly National Employment and Training, Vocational Training Corporation (VTC)) and were often chosen with a lack of clarity. Until recently the E-TVET Fund collected 1% of the distributable net profit of companies in Jordan. Its reorganisation was intended to provide the private sector with a majority on the board and a comprehensive role in management. Government decisions in December 2009 and early 2010 halted this process. Changes in the governance of the fund resulted in a stronger position for the Ministry of Labour and the Vocational Training Centres, and no decision-making role for the private sector (ETF, 2010b, p. 16).
- Social partners are part of the institutional landscape in the Maghreb countries in relation to training in employment, where they play an active role in decision-making bodies (they are part of the management committees of the Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian Funds). But they are absent from the decision-making process in the Mashrek countries, where representatives of employers and employees are replaced by Chambers or Councils (Mayen, 2011).

In summary, although training funds have been established in every country except Lebanon – funds that aim in theory to upskill, reskill or adapt the workforce – problems of governance, of complexity of procedures and of a lack of information for the potential beneficiaries strongly affect their usefulness. They are either underused (Algeria, Morocco and Egypt) or misused (Jordan).

## 3.2 TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Training offered in the public sector appears to be more widespread than that in the private sector in all the countries concerned. For example, in Morocco all ministries and public enterprises are required to have a strategy for human resource development as part of the overall objective of modernising the administration. Thus each ministry allocates its own training budget. In some cases, the ministries and the public enterprises for which they are responsible have established training centres; this includes the ministries of transport, health, education, agriculture, finance and the interior. At the same time ministries also call on the services of private, external providers, including higher education institutions.

With regard to Tunisia, Bousselmi (2010) mentions training provided by public and private organisations for first job seekers and long-term unemployed individuals. The main ministry responsible is the Ministry of Education and Training, although other ministries also organise training for job seekers for their respective sectors (e.g. agriculture, health, tourism, artisan trades). The main public provider is the Agence tunisienne de la formation professionnelle (ATFP), particularly for the industrial sector. It has 135 training centres, almost 2 000 trainers and almost 900 information and guidance staff. The mission of the centres, which were created in 1993, is to train both young people (initial training) and adults, taking account of social and economic needs. They implement training programmes in partnership with enterprises, organise programmes of continuing education and training, and provide technical assistance to enterprises. The demand for ATFP training is increasing continuously, as is the range and the levels of training required. The Agence de la vulgarisation et de la formation agricoles has 30 training centres spread across the country and offers initial and continuing training for workers in the agricultural and fishing sectors. Demand for this training is low, and there are currently around 400 trainees a year. Training institutions under the responsibility of the National Tourist Office have eight training centres, mainly situated on the coast, providing training for the hotel and catering industry at three levels, namely skilled worker (certificat d'aptitude professionnelle), technician (brevet de technicien professionnel) and higher technician (brevet de technicien supérieur).

### BOX 3.1 INSTRUMENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT IN TUNISIA

Instruments A and D of the Vocational Integration and Adaptation Fund (Fonds d'insertion et d'adaptation professionnelle (FIAP)) foster access to employment by funding the cost of the training leading to a job. All unemployed individuals are eligible. These instruments benefited 45 750 people between 2001 and 2008.

Instruments 1 to 5 of the National Employment Fund 21-21 (Fonds national de l'emploi (FNE)) organise training in new information technologies (ITs). Instruments 6 to 12 cover training funds for initial training. Between 2001 and 2008, 444 317 people benefited from these instruments.

Lastly, private sector training for job seekers has been in place since 2001. There are over 500 centres that offer training in over 170 specialisations. These centres are organised under two Chambers and come under the supervision of the Direction générale de la normalisation of the Ministry of Education. The Tunisian agency for employment and self-employment (Agence nationale pour l'emploi et le travail indépendant) also organises training for job seekers.

The majority of job seekers fall into one of the following four categories:

- young males and females who have left the initial education system at the end of the nine years of basic schooling;
- school leavers with the baccalaureate;
- students who have dropped out of higher education;
- higher education graduates.

Four main types of programme are organised to address the issue of youth unemployment:

1. training for university graduates to improve their chances of labour market integration;
2. labour market integration contracts that give university graduates and long-term unemployed individuals the opportunity to retrain;
3. qualification contracts that enable job seekers to train in fields in which skilled employees are needed;
4. training in enterprise creation and other technical training that is needed for setting up a business.

Although all of the centres mentioned focus predominantly on initial training, they also provide adult training. The number of trainees in training centres (all types) is constantly increasing, and rose from 61 377 in 2006 to 76 223 in 2008. With regard to public sector training, trainees do not pay for their training, which is covered by the different programmes, though they do pay a registration fee. Private providers charge fees, though these can be covered by the 'training cheque' system, which was introduced in 2007 and allows some of the costs to be covered for specific sectors and specialisms targeted each year depending on the identified needs of the economy.

In some cases, if trainees do not reach the level required to enable them to follow a cycle to diploma level, a certificate of competence may be available. All adult training certificates and diplomas are part of the national qualification classification, and therefore the assessment of trainees is part of a regular procedure, the qualifications are fully recognised and progression is within the classification system. Adult training programmes follow a competence-based approach.

This situation is similar in Syria, where most ministries have a human resource development policy with training plans and programmes for the staff. The governmental sector accounts for 28% of those employed in Syria, i.e. about

1 379 977 individuals, of whom 75% are male. Some of the training programmes are conducted in cooperation with Arabic and international organisations such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the EU. One example is the Modernisation of Vocational Education and Training (MVET) programme, in which an important teacher-training programme has been implemented with EU support.

Training is financed through government funds and there is no social partner involvement, except in the apprenticeship schemes run by the Ministry of Education. It takes place in public sector training centres, which are designated for employees of various ministries, according to the sectors for which they are responsible, e.g. Ministry of Finance centres for the banking sector. For public sector companies, training takes place on the job within the company, externally at the company training centre, or at another training centre.

One specific example is the Commercial Bank of Syria. This is a public bank with an innovation and modernisation plan that includes an intensive training plan covering all aspects of bank services, languages and computer training. The results of training are integrated into the incentive scheme for employees. This example is considered by Al-Jouni (2010) to be indicative of the importance of training employees in reaching economic objectives.

Information is available to all employees in the public sector in Syria, and training is available to all, regardless of their gender or age. However, one obstacle is the absence of a well-developed learning culture, which Al-Jouni suggests may hinder the uptake of opportunities. The level and length of training varies considerably from courses lasting a few days or months, to longer, formal courses that lead to a diploma. For short courses trainees receive an attendance certificate, while formal courses lead to recognition. There may also be some recognition of prior learning for entry to courses, as well as the possibility of progression.

Jordan provides another example relating to public sector provision of training. As in Morocco and Syria, the government in Jordan emphasises the importance of human resource development in the public sector, and all ministries therefore have in place a policy and strategy, with dedicated staff to analyse staff training needs and establish a training plan, which is implemented either within the ministry (for instance, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health have their own training centres) or using external providers. The focus is on upgrading the technical, administrative and technological capacities of staff. Four examples of public sector training are presented here:

- the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) under the Ministry of Labour;
- the Ministry of Education and the Queen Rania Al-Abdullah Centre for Educational Technology, which has provided programmes for the ministry;
- the National Institute for Training (NIT), which provides programmes for all public sector staff;
- the Land and Survey Department, which is an example of a specific sectoral department of the government.

The VTC (under the Ministry of Labour) provides training for unemployed people aged 16–35 of both genders, though there are more males than females. The vocational preparation programmes target the semi-skilled and skilled levels, as well as offering an applied secondary education programme, craft worker programmes and health and safety programmes for supervisors. There are also upgrading programmes in a range of fields. The training is provided in 8 institutes and 34 centres across the country; in 2009, 6 200 unemployed people were accepted for training. Trainees receive certificates on passing the exams, which are at different levels, thereby creating opportunities for progression. Funding comes through the government from the Ministry of Finance, though the VTC also receives income from two other sources, namely from the sale of its services and from international donors.

With regard to the Ministry of Education, as part of the first phase of the Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy (ERfKE1), the National Education Strategy (2006) and the General Framework for the Policies for 2009–13 include priorities relating to capacity development for Ministry of Education staff. This has involved developing a directorate responsible for human resource development, developing the capacity of education supervision staff, providing schools with qualified technical staff, upgrading the capacity of school principals, and adopting national standards for teacher professional development. The training department offers professional development for teachers and administrative staff, and teachers' salaries are linked to the successful completion of programmes, which include leadership, teaching and evaluation strategies; computerised curricula; and class learning environment. The number of teachers trained in ICT between 2002 and 2009, for example, was over 91 000 females and almost 64 000 males. The training was provided by the Queen Rania Al-Abdullah Centre for Educational Technology.

The centre runs programmes that can be undertaken either on-line or face to face. It is the authorised centre for the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL), the testing for this being supervised by UNESCO, which also issues the certificates; 95% of teachers have successfully completed ICDL training. Ministry of Education staff have been trained through INTEL courses on integrating electronics into learning and using technology in teaching, as well as through the EduWave programme (which includes content for parents). The Ministry of Education, which has financed all of the training mentioned here, is considering integrating distance and virtual learning (which would be funded by the Ministry of Finance and the World Bank) into the second phase of ERfKE.

The NIT, which was founded in 1968 to develop human resources in public administration, provides training that contributes to national and regional capacity building in the public sector. There are three branches, in Amman, at the University of Yarmouk and at the Mu'tah University. There are three types of programmes, namely the Training Path Programmes; training to prepare government institutions to participate in the 'King Abdullah II Award for Government Excellency and Transparency'; and other special training programmes. Training Path Programmes, which were developed in 1997 with World Bank support, are offered at advanced management, middle management, qualifying management and basic management levels, and for new employees. The NIT has its own trainers and brings in others from higher education and the private and public sectors. Around 340 sessions are held every year for around 6 500 participants. The certificates are issued by the NIT, together with the Higher Education Council and the Civil Service Bureau. The funding comes partly from the government and partly from the fees paid for trainees (some are supported by government funding and some by international donors).

Finally, the Land and Survey Department has a strategic plan to train 1 500 employees for the sector. The training is linked to professional development and promotion, and most of it is carried out in-house with government funding. In 2009, 42 training programmes were held, attended by 753 employees. The programmes correspond to three levels, namely director, middle management and management, and training is also provided for newly appointed staff. The Land and Survey Department issues its own certificates.

In summary, public sector employment is important in the countries considered in this report, in terms of both the numbers of people employed and the national aspirations. The training organised contributes to the development of the qualifications of the working population. Ministries have training plans linked to national strategies in which human resource development is an integral factor. Training is provided in-house or at training centres for staff at different levels of responsibility and is free of charge. Depending on the type and level of training, certificates are either formally recognised, or simply certificates of attendance that do not allow for progression of the individuals concerned. Although the number of people trained is rising in some countries (e.g. Tunisia), there is a need to continue to increase the numbers (e.g. in Morocco). Tunisia is the only country of the four in which all the training organised by the state has a formal quality assurance mechanism through the *Référentiel national qualité de la formation professionnelle*. An interesting scheme to reduce the cost of training that is organised by private providers has been implemented in Tunisia. This is the 'training cheque' scheme, which allows costs to be covered for sectors and specialisms targeted as part of the national economic development strategy.

### 3.3 TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The evidence in the country reports suggests that the situation in the private sector is much more variable. As previously mentioned, the countries of the Maghreb have well-developed institutional arrangements, while in Mashrek countries the initiative for organising and funding training is more usually taken by specific sectors or large enterprises.

Labour law in Lebanon stipulates that employers have a responsibility to train employees for the tasks for which they have been hired to perform, and to deliver a certificate for the training. According to Kreitem (2010), although the legislation has been in place for several decades, it has not been fully implemented by the majority of private enterprises. This situation is similar in Syria, where it is believed that enterprises have training plans that are not always implemented.

In Tunisia all employees in enterprises can apply for training, though there are some difficulties in ensuring that information is broadly available. Most of the training is of short duration and takes place in public training centres. The courses qualify individuals to do a certain type of work, but do not usually lead to recognised certificates or diplomas; hence, there is no formal progression, though further training may be available. Assessment is carried out directly by the training providers. The CNFCPP has introduced quality procedures for its different structures and services, although the organisations with which it works to implement training are not currently covered by quality assurance procedures.

Training for employees in Morocco is free of charge for the trainees, the cost being covered entirely by enterprises, either from their own funds or under the various measures for funding training. The qualification level of workers is very low: a quarter have not completed primary school, and this figure rises to half of workers in rural areas, which means that the potential demand for adult training is very high. However, training only benefits workers in the formal sector, and so 60–80% of the labour force are outside of the scope of training measures as they work in the informal sector.

Since 1996 training in the private sector and for some public sector enterprises in Morocco has been regulated by a decree that established the Professional Tax. This is 1.6% of an organisation's annual salary bill, and is to be spent on training, of which 30% is for continuing education and training. The way in which it is spent can be decided within the enterprise or at group level. The largest part of this funding is directed towards training through the groupements interprofessionnels d'aide au conseil (GIAC) and the special training contracts (contrats spéciaux de formation – CSF). The former are non-profit organisations managed by federations of enterprises that help companies to formulate their skill needs. The latter are funds run by tripartite bodies that assist enterprises and sectors to establish training

programmes. A third measure, the *Métiers mondiaux du Maroc*, was established in 2008. This is focused on the development of four sectors (automobile, aeronautic, electronic and offshoring) with a view to providing high-level, skilled staff for these sectors and responding to the training needs of staff following recruitment.

Training has taken place in the private sector over a longer period of time, though it is limited to those enterprises that are liable for the Professional Tax. It appears from the country report that the training carried out falls far short of the target of 30% of the workforce.

Training in Morocco can either lead to a diploma or be in the form of short courses, mainly for the purposes of upskilling. Training leading to a diploma lasts at least several months, and the assessment will depend on whether it is a state-recognised diploma or one specific to the training provider. This is very similar in both the public and private sectors, though functional literacy training is also provided for employees, with 80% of the costs covered by the CSF. However, despite a high level of need, literacy courses for workers in employment are in decline. The number of people who benefit from functional literacy courses through continuing education and training is around 1% of the total number registered for literacy courses.

In Syria employees in the private sector represent 65% of all employees, with female participation being lower than in the public sector. Legislation makes the establishment of Joint Consultative Councils obligatory for sectors with a responsibility to develop vocational training strategies. However, the effectiveness of training in the private sector varies considerably. Whereas training is implemented effectively in the banking, assurance and telecommunications sector, there is a concern that more training needs to be developed in the tourism and industrial sectors, both of which have relatively good resources in terms of training centres. There is also a need to develop more training in the agricultural sector, and the construction sector lacks skilled workers.

Incentives to train in the private sector in Syria tend to be better for higher-level employees. However, enterprises fear that if they train employees, their staff may be poached by other firms, and this reduces their incentive to train; however, information on this is anecdotal as there are no statistics. Training tends to concentrate on current needs and short-term investment. High-quality training has de facto recognition, since competence is recognised in the private sector and there is usually some recognition of prior learning. Practical assessment is carried out in order to evaluate the competences acquired. Progression to the next level within an organisation may take place.

In Egypt, as in all the countries concerned, training for adults is undertaken in a range of institutions affiliated to the ministries, in school or universities, in private centres and in the workplace. Training is directed towards all staff, both male and female, and usually addresses all age groups. Information about training programmes is transmitted through the Egyptian Federation of Chambers. Most training leads to attendance certificates, though it provides no means of progression into formal education and training.

Quality of training is another issue that requires attention, especially in the private sector. The report on Lebanon states that the quality of the training depends wholly on the trainers and providers. Many employers do not consider training to be important for their activities, and Shawareb (2010) considers that the sector lacks the motivation to organise training. Few workers actually benefit from the training offered. This is certainly an accurate summary of the general situation concerning the quality of training in the private sector in all the countries in the study.

In summary, although training plans may be statutory or strongly encouraged, implementation remains an issue. Furthermore, it is the large enterprises that are the ones most likely to implement structured training plans. The Maghreb countries are interesting examples of a system of continuing training with a solid institutional structure and funding mechanisms. In these cases training organised by the enterprise is likely to be free of charge for employees. The recognition of the training undertaken by employees remains an issue, as there are limited opportunities for progression to the next level. This also raises the issue of incentives for employees to train: does training contribute to their career development, and if so, how?

### 3.4 SECTOR-BASED TRAINING

This section focuses on three interesting examples taken from the Lebanese report, namely two very different sectors – banking and the industrial sector – and the ICT sector, which is an interesting example of a recent and developing sector that has a major influence on the economy.

The first example is the banking sector. Since the early 1990s considerable efforts have been made to improve the functioning and competitiveness of this sector, which employs around 1.2% of the labour force, mainly young adults (57% are under the age of 40). Three-quarters have formal training or a university degree, and women are well represented, at 43% of the total workforce. Training is established as a right in the collective agreement. The Association of Banks in Lebanon offers training for all professional levels and includes over 30 different activities. It covers a wide range of specialities and helps banks to analyse their training needs and design their programmes.

Training is organised for employees, middle managers and senior managers in the form of in-house training, intensive courses and specialised sessions. The specialised sessions target mainly employees, and almost as many women as men. Two-thirds of the staff targeted by the intensive sessions are men, and over 90% are middle managers. The in-house training sessions are fairly equally divided between employees and middle managers, and around 40% of the trainees are women.

The Centre for Banking Studies was established in the late 1960s as a partnership between the Association of Banks in Lebanon and St Joseph's University in Beirut, and provides a range of professional development services to banks. It has established a strategy for skills and competence development for banking employees leading to certification and offering advanced diploma programmes (six semesters). Since 2000 it has offered six professional specialised certificates in several domains, lasting from 40 to 60 contact hours.

Quality assurance in this sector is achieved through the well-organised and structured provision of training that is adapted to the needs of banks and carried out by professional trainers. In addition, quality is assured by cooperating with international bodies such as the Paris-based Centre de formation de la profession bancaire. Kreitem (2010) reports that the system functions well and that staff who wish or need to undertake training do not encounter barriers or obstacles.

A second example from Lebanon is the industrial sector, in which around a quarter of the workforce is employed. The sector is characterised by a prevalence of small and family-owned enterprises, a lack of innovation, and limited market coverage. The Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI) has a vocational education and training committee that develops policy for the whole sector, and there are also several product-based sector syndicates. The ALI organises seminars and workshops on topics such as quality, certification and management. Training seminars organised by the product syndicates tend to be technical in orientation. The most active syndicates are those in the food industries and the paper and packaging industries, both of which regularly receive international donor support, including from bilateral cooperation agreements.

Membership of these organisations is not compulsory, and training is only provided for members, which means that many small enterprises that do not elect to join do not have access to the training offered. However, there are almost no regular programmes provided for workers in the industrial sector outside of those for members of the ALI and the syndicates, and those supported by international donor funding. One exception is a programme supported by the Directorate General for Vocational Training and the Food Industries to establish a technical school in the Bekaa Valley. This initiative is also supported by EU funding, but is struggling to become operational. If successful, it is thought that this new model of public-private partnership could be replicated in other sectors.

The ICT sector in Lebanon is growing in size and economic importance. It currently employs almost 7 000 staff, 60% in large firms and 30% in medium-sized companies. Firms that produce both hardware and software account for 60% of employment in the sector. There are two key bodies, the Professional Computer Association and the Association of the Lebanese Software Industry. The first acts mainly as a lobbying group while the second is committed to improving the competitiveness of the sector, including through seminars, and promoting International Standards Organisation (ISO) certification. The point to note here is the involvement of sector professional bodies in human resource development through more informal means such as seminars. Other professional associations in Lebanon, such as those for accounting and engineering, also provide seminars and courses for their members.

Morocco has long had a sectoral strategy that has tourism, textiles and ICT as priority sectors, supported by the European Union (EU) MEDA project just completed. The demand for skills in these sectors has led to the creation of skills inventories and job profiles. Morocco is the only country in the region (and one of the few in the world) that has attempted to measure the impact of continuing learning (ETF, 2008) on sector productivity (in tourism and textiles). Following this research, in 2008 the Department of Evaluation of Continuing Training was created within the Ministry of Labour.

In summary, in all three sectors there is a trend towards very structured training that takes account of the current and future needs of the sector using different approaches. The banking sector organises human resource development at all levels in-house, working with a range of training providers, including universities. The training is quality controlled, including through partnership with an external (French) organisation. The industrial sector is more complex, with many small enterprises and several product-based syndicates; this situation creates a variety of training needs that are in part supported by donor funding, and there are also moves to establish new types of funding partnerships between the public and private sectors.

### 3.5 ENTERPRISES

Several of the reports note that although there is an obligation, or at least a strong encouragement, for firms to have training plans, such plans often do not exist, or else are not implemented. This is attributed to a training culture that is developing only slowly in the private sector. The example here is from the country report on Jordan, and concerns two large enterprises, the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. Ltd and Safeways.

The Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. Ltd has a strategy for developing the professional capacity of its staff through training, which is organised at the Abdel-Hameed Showman Training Centre and is linked to employees' annual evaluation. Training-needs analysis is carried out through a survey of the more than 3 300 employees, who all participate in at least three training programmes every year. All employees have easy access to the training centre facilitated by the company, and certificates are issued to those who pass the exams. In 2008 around 260 training courses were carried out for 2 440 employees, most of them inside Jordan but around 10% outside the country. Training included programmes for recently qualified engineers.

The Sultan Training Centre is responsible for the training and professional development of the 1 600 employees of Safeways, a retail department store with 23 branches in Jordan. Training is carried out in-house; all recruits have a one-day induction course, and three types of training are then offered: head office and operations; customer courtesy; and customer services. Other training is provided according to needs. Certificates are issued by the training centre.

### 3.6 CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Training organised through the different Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Trades and Agriculture is highlighted in the country reports on Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Such training addresses the needs of SMEs in the three countries, providing courses for different types of firm, management training, business start-up support and also programmes linked to the acquisition of formal education qualifications such as Master of Business Administration (MBA) degrees.

In Jordan, the Euro Jordanian Advanced Business Institute of the Chamber of Industry is a non-profit organisation established in 2004 to develop SMEs. It works with universities and training providers to organise seminars focused on management and practical skills. Its budget is collected annually from the industrial sector and it offers short management-development programmes, round tables for the industrial sector, in-company customised programmes and consultancy services. During the first 10 months of 2009 it delivered 38 programmes for 1 031 trainees, who were middle and senior managers from the industrial sector, 75% of whom were male. The programmes are free for enterprises from the industrial sector, though enterprises from other sectors are required to pay. Certificates are awarded by the centre, and in some cases their programmes are accredited by a university, for example by the University of Jordan and the Durham Business School for the MBA programme.

In Lebanon the different Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture are also active in training. For example the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut (CCIAB) (Beirut and Mount Lebanon) has a training centre that operates in partnership with the French Institut de formation par alternance and offers courses, seminars, workshops and professional diplomas. The sessions offer practical training that is moderated by professional trainers and is of immediate benefit to firms. The CCIAB (Tripoli and North Lebanon) operates a business development centre that incubates, hosts and provides training to support business opportunities. It offers training in all the areas that new businesses need, such as insurance, business plans and legal issues. Since 2009 training has been offered through the SME Manager Training Programme at three professional membership grades, with a certificate to attest to the completion of the programme. Many other courses are offered to support enterprise creation and development, including by the Berytech Technical and Health Centre at the University of St Joseph, and the Euro-Lebanese Centre for Industrial Modernisation.

In Syria the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture and Tourism include human resource development in their strategic objectives and some have appointed human resource teams. These teams receive intensive training to give them the skills to be able to provide the necessary support to enterprises. Training takes place in a number of different types of centres, including those established by the chambers. There are also centres for specific trades or sectors (such as clothing and textiles), and some training is provided by the centres of the different ministries or by private training providers.

**BOX 3.2 THE CASE OF THE ALEPPO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Many enterprises in Syria are family-run businesses that have no human resource strategy and do not offer any training to their employees. A survey of almost 4 000 enterprises in the Aleppo area in 2005 showed that less than 1% of firms in the industrial sector had obtained ISO 9001. The same survey showed that 95% of the enterprises employed fewer than 50 people. Most of these enterprises considered that they did not need 'complicated modern management'. There is strong cooperation in the area with the Syrian Enterprise Business Centre, and with other organisations from the Arab region and the EU that have established training laboratories and provide technical support. Since 2000 the Ministry of Education and the Chamber of Industry have jointly run an apprenticeship scheme targeted at young people in VET schools. A key achievement is that this is the first partnership between the government and the private sector that has been instrumental in introducing new trades and specialisations.

*Source: Al-Jouni, 2010*

### 3.7 OBSTACLES

A number of obstacles to training for employees can be illustrated using examples from different countries. In Egypt, training plans tend to exist and be implemented only in large companies. There is a lack of engagement in training on the part of employers, who fear that staff will be poached, and who do not see training as an investment. For employees there is a lack of information and guidance, and little incentive to train in terms of career and salary progression. This tendency for training to be more prevalent in large companies appears to be common to all the countries covered by the study, though it is also common to most EU member states

The issue of poaching is also raised by the Syrian country report, which also draws attention to several other issues in both the private and public sectors. Although all government sector organisations have training plans, the effectiveness of their implementation is limited, as there is rarely a human resource management strategy and no clear process of training needs analysis. The complexity of procedures and the difficulty of organising training around the production plan are also an issue. Many employees do not recognise the benefits of training. Furthermore, some individuals find it difficult to attend because of their family responsibilities, and many have a second job to increase their income. Similarly, recent studies in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries and in the EU found that significant numbers of adults who are not participating in education and training give family responsibilities and a lack of time as reasons for this<sup>2</sup>. Having a second job clearly creates a situation in which training outside of working hours becomes very difficult.

The Moroccan report raises issues about the implementation of government decisions, and draws attention to the fact that training is not supported by the necessary instruments in the form of validation of prior learning and a national qualifications framework. It is suggested that training favours employees who already have a good level of education and training, and that the long and complex procedures for obtaining financial support to organise training are not appropriate to SMEs. There is also a need for awareness to be raised about the benefits of training for small firms. Training is of very variable quality. One outcome of this situation is that during the period 2002–08, only 25% of the credits allocated for the CSF were actually spent. Moreover, only around 1 400 enterprises benefit each year, despite the fact that around 200 000 are eligible. A training market is developing, though it is currently only accessible to a small percentage of enterprises.

The Tunisian report also focuses on mechanisms and their implementation, since funding instruments do not cover all categories of enterprise. Furthermore, the informal sector, which is important for the Tunisian economy, cannot benefit from funding support for training. Funding for innovation has increased more slowly than the other funding instruments as a result of the complexity of the procedures. It would appear that the engagement of certain public sector actors, such as ATEP and the National Tourist Office, is insufficient to respond to the human resource development needs of the enterprises they cover.

<sup>2</sup> For studies that include an exploration of the obstacles to adult learning, see OECD (2005) and European Association for the Education of Adults (2006).

### 3.8 MAIN ISSUES

A number of shared issues are discussed in the country reports.

- It would appear that human resource development and training have been implemented more effectively in the public sector than in the private sector (e.g. Syria). Some countries' ministries have human resource development plans that are implemented through training (Syria, Morocco).
- In the private sector large companies are more likely than SMEs to organise training for their employees, especially in key sectors of the economy. This is the case for the petroleum and industrial sectors in Jordan and for banking in Lebanon and Syria. In Morocco it includes the automobile sector, aeronautics, electronics and offshoring, as part of the *Métiers mondiaux du Maroc*, and in Tunisia the agricultural sector.
- For SMEs there are two main issues. Firstly, there is clearly a need to raise awareness about the advantages of training (Syria), and secondly, in some countries where funding support is available, the complex procedures may discourage small firms from applying (Morocco, Tunisia). There is also a perception that training can lead to trained workers being poached for their enhanced skills.
- The different chambers play an important role at local level for SMEs of different sectors in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Sector bodies are also important in these countries, as well as in Tunisia.
- Funding mechanisms have been established in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia that oblige enterprises to pay a training levy which may be mutualised through special funds, or used to fund in-company training directly.
- From the point of view of employees, some of the reports mention that there are few incentives to train in terms of salary and career enhancement, and the obstacles may be inhibiting, especially for those with two jobs and/or family responsibilities. The durations and outcomes of training (type of award, progression, etc.) vary considerably among and within the countries. In general the most common situation is that only attendance certificates are awarded. This raises the issue of the recognition of non-formal education and training, possibly within a national qualifications framework or similar mechanism (e.g. a register), in order to begin to put in place opportunities for individual employees to build on their qualification levels and to be able to take up opportunities to progress.
- There are few formal quality-assurance mechanisms in place. The most effective appears to be the labour market itself.
- The informal sector of the economy is relatively significant in all the countries concerned, though it is not covered by measures to support training.
- There is a lack of statistical data on the training that takes place. Data are collected by different types of institutions, bodies and providers. This does not make it possible to obtain an overall and reliable perspective.

## 4. EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED OR OUT OF THE LABOUR MARKET

The second group of people for which information on the education and training provided was requested are individuals who are either unemployed or are not in the labour market. Each report focused on the categories and information that were most relevant for the country. When the terms of reference were drawn up a number of possible groups were identified, but some are given more prominence in the reports than others, as will be seen in the sections that follow. The different groups included:

- graduates of higher education and school leavers who have achieved a qualification and for whom labour market entry courses are organised;
- early school leavers under the age of 18;
- working children;
- adults undertaking literacy courses;
- beneficiaries of active employment measures;
- individuals receiving upskilling or reskilling training following redundancy;
- registered unemployed people;
- women entering or returning to the labour market;
- beneficiaries of education and training for the agricultural sector and rural areas;
- other groups that are relevant to the particular country.

This chapter aimed to encompass government-funded measures, programmes funded through international cooperation and programmes organised by non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The data gathered for the country reports followed the list of items in Annex 1. The data collected is presented under thematic headings. Examples are given firstly, of national systems for tackling training for unemployed people, and secondly, of sectoral approaches.

### 4.1 TWO GROUPS OF INDIVIDUALS

Two groups are considered in this chapter. The first group consists of unemployed people, i.e. those who are on the labour market or trying to enter it. The second group is the pool of people not counted in the active population, but who may be active in the informal sector (with or without remuneration). Women are particularly well represented in this latter group, with those in rural areas being especially vulnerable. However, this is not necessarily reflected in the training provision. Average unemployment rates remain around 15% in the countries in this study, with some variations, and with a much higher rate for young people. Two countries illustrate the situation.

In Egypt, despite improvements, the unemployment rate remains high among young people, and particularly among young women. Educational attainment does not protect individuals against unemployment. Official figures show a decrease in unemployment from almost 12% in 1998 to under 9% in 2008, with the greatest improvement being in rural areas; this may be due to an increase in activity in the informal sector and in unpaid labour. Data included by Aly (2010) indicate that in 2006 female unemployment was four times higher than male unemployment, and this is one of the highest ratios in the world. Some 82% of the unemployed people are under the age of 30, and a very high percentage are first-time entrants to the labour market and holders of secondary school diplomas. Unemployment rates are relatively low for people with lower education levels; they are significantly higher for technical secondary school graduates, but lower again for graduates of post-secondary training and higher education. The country report notes that figures can vary between sources, and some independent sources give higher unemployment figures.

There is an 8.5% unemployment rate in Syria, but it is much higher for the female population, the assumption being that employers prefer to hire male staff. The highest levels of unemployment are in the age groups 20–24 years (37.6%) and 25–29 years (22.4%). Among those with only basic schooling, the unemployment rate is 35.8%. This suggests that the largest group will be females with basic schooling in the age group 20–29 years. However, it is difficult to estimate the real unemployment rate, as some of the people registered as unemployed do in fact have employment in the private sector, but are seeking public sector employment.

As can be seen from these examples, the vulnerable groups are those previously mentioned in this report (see Chapter 2), namely young people, and especially young women, and higher education graduates, though the situation for young people with only secondary education may be worse. However, the country reports for both Egypt and Syria point to the difficulty of obtaining high-quality data, given the variations in sources and the fact that some people may be declared unemployed but nevertheless be working in the informal sector to earn a living.

The following sections focus on specific populations and needs (young people, literacy and higher education). The obstacles to which attention was drawn are grouped, and the final section brings together the main issues.

## 4.2 EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

Yousif (2009) reports that in the Arab region overall more than 6 million children of school age are out of school, and of that total, around 60% are girls. Nearly two-thirds of them have never been to school.

Ibourk (2010) describes the situation as regards education and training for children who fall within the regulations for compulsory education but are not attending school. It is estimated that around 200 000 children leave school before the end of the primary cycle in Morocco, and that there are over 1 million children of compulsory education age who are out of school. This group are clearly on the frontier between initial education and adult education, given their specific situation. The strategies for tackling this problem will have subsequent repercussions on adult education, both general and vocational.

Several programmes have been set up for 9–14-year-olds in order to address these very specific educational needs. These are non-formal, ‘second chance’ schooling programmes that have different objectives depending on the age of the children. The programmes are managed by the Department for Non-Formal Education of the Ministry of Education, and are organised in partnership with NGOs and donors (e.g. international organisations and bilateral agreements). The programmes either allow the children to return to school or give them initial vocational training that allows them to enter the labour market with some skills. For those under 9 years of age the aim is to (re-)integrate them into primary education, while for 11–12-year-olds the aim is to direct them towards initial vocational training. For those over the age of 12 the aim is to help them to integrate successfully into the world of work. Similar programmes have also been introduced for children who work (such as those working in the craft sector, or girls in domestic work) and also for children in very difficult situations (street children and children in prison).

## 4.3 EDUCATION FOR LITERACY

Literacy is an issue to a greater or lesser degree in all the countries concerned. Examples of programmes in Lebanon, Morocco, Syria and Algeria are presented here, though the literacy rates do differ from country to country. While both Lebanon and Syria have relatively high adult illiteracy rates – 10% and 17% respectively – Algeria and Morocco are grappling with high rates of illiteracy and with the resulting problems (respectively 70% and 51–57%, depending on the estimates used).

In Lebanon the NCIAE was established in the mid 1990s and is chaired by a representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Its overall aim is to support sustainable development by tackling illiteracy and making literacy a human development priority. The literacy rate for 2009 is estimated to be 90% (UNDP, 2009). The NCIAE cooperates with both the public and private sectors and delivers education mainly through the ministry’s regional Community Development Centres. Priority is given to programmes addressing health awareness, school health, women’s empowerment, social awareness and rehabilitation. Programmes include literacy, vocational training, training for early school leavers, and computer literacy.

The literacy programmes offer around 160 hours of education over 6–9 months using textbooks, workbooks and instructors’ manuals. There are different types of programmes based on a life skills approach (influenced by UNESCO), learning for life for early school leavers, and reproductive and adolescent health, as well as programmes specifically for illiterate and semi-literate women. Over 1 600 trainers from the Ministry of Social Affairs, NGOs, the military and correctional institutions have been successfully trained. As part of the fight against illiteracy, the UNILIE programme enables university students to gain credits towards their degree for delivering literacy training and other community work.

‘Eliminating Illiteracy’ is a major national programme in Jordan that lasts 32 months. It is divided into two parts, and following completion the learner receives a certificate equivalent to the sixth grade of basic schooling. Many more centres across the country are delivering such training to women (446) than to men (27), as the female illiteracy rate remains much higher than the male rate. This disparity is reflected in the numbers of individuals enrolled: of the 6 000 taking part, 5 500 are women.

Literacy training is organised for both young people and adults in Morocco. Given the high rate of illiteracy in the adult population (estimated by Kreitem (2010) to be around 40%), the issue is of critical importance and has major consequences for social and economic development. A strategy to combat illiteracy was formulated by the *Charte nationale de l'éducation et de la formation* and is implemented by the Direction de la lutte contre l'analphabétisme in the Ministry of Education. There are four main programmes:

- general programme: activities organised by the Ministry of Education, usually in schools, with the teachers who deliver the programme receiving overtime pay;
- public sector programme: activities organised by other ministries;
- civil society programme: literacy programmes organised by the non-profit sector that can be wholly or partly funded, or undertaken by these organisations using their own resources;
- enterprise programme: literacy for employees.

These programmes are open to all children and adults over the age of 15. Registration on courses is on a voluntary basis, though for some, such as those on developing micro credits or local development, literacy courses may be an obligatory component. Around 650 000 individuals follow these programmes every year. There has been recently a decrease in the number of people registered in Ministry of Education programmes, but a rise in the number registered in programmes run by other ministries. The two largest programmes in terms of number of students are the public sector programme and the civil society programme, while the enterprise programme is very small. These programmes aim to develop many competences in addition to literacy, such as self-esteem and confidence, but are not part of a certification system through which they can be recognised. The Direction de la lutte contre l'analphabétisme is also developing interactive tools to enable individuals to learn Arabic and French. Another programme is being developed with Italian cooperation; this uses television and aims to encourage family learning through which younger members of the family help the adults.

Literacy courses in Syria are addressing a very important issue: Al-Jouni (2010) refers to recent surveys suggesting that the country has an illiteracy rate of 19% (which is nevertheless much lower than those in Morocco and Algeria). A target has been set in the current Five Year Plan to reduce this rate by 50% by 2015. Literacy courses are provided by the Adult Learning Directorate of the Ministry of Commerce and are free of charge. Cooperation with UNESCO has made it possible to establish centres in poor regions and to provide learning materials for blind people. The Women's Union is active in this area. The main problem in terms of access is reaching the people who need the literacy training. The literacy programmes last six months, with an optional additional three-month programme. Attendance is obligatory for the 80% of the programme that is competence based. At the end, learners are awarded a literacy certificate. Quality assurance is carried out mainly through monitoring by the Ministry of Commerce, and according to the country report, is assured by high quality curricula and well-trained trainers.

A final example comes from the report on Algeria. Literacy is an important area of government intervention for individuals, as the literacy rate in the early 2000s was around 70%. The government has committed a substantial budget of 50 billion dinars until 2016 with the aim of eradicating illiteracy in order to increase social inclusion. Three government departments are involved in the implementation of this action: the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Vocational Education and Training, and the Ministry of Solidarity in the National Fight against Illiteracy Programme. The activities include:

- developing training programmes linked to literacy;
- adapting the teaching techniques to suit the population;
- developing learner-centred methods;
- supporting learner autonomy;
- initiating learners into the use of ICTs within the framework of the extension of the internet connections to all households.

Assessments have identified the populations most affected by illiteracy. Rural populations (males and females, adults and children, and both sedentary and nomadic) are one such group, and others include those who have been affected by terrorism, and those who have never attended school. The government action concerns the whole population, including women in rural areas for whom there are specific activities, including encouragement to create micro enterprises.

Two other interesting initiatives are worthy of note. University students in Lebanon can receive credits towards their degree for participating in the delivery of literacy training and other community work. This type of service learning programme may be of interest to other countries in the region. The use of television in Morocco, a project developed with Italian cooperation, is an approach that could also be considered for other countries, as it aims to engage family learning.

In summary, all the examples demonstrate the substantial efforts that are being implemented to tackle the problems of illiteracy for both young people and adults. In all cases the illiteracy rate has an adverse effect on economic and social

development, as well as on personal development and social inclusion. In some cases literacy courses are linked to vocational training and the acquisition of computer skills (Lebanon) and to the acquisition of broader social and life skills programmes in others (Lebanon and Morocco). In Syria those who successfully complete the programme are awarded a recognised certificate.

## 4.4 TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED YOUNG PEOPLE

As a result of demographic factors, and the consequent high priority of youth employment, many initiatives have been introduced in all the countries concerned. This section focuses on Jordan and Syria, where there are public and private sector initiatives to assist young graduates to enter the labour market with skills that will help them to stay in employment. Some of the programmes described offer employment training, while others involve a work contract that is linked to the training but goes beyond the training period.

In Jordan the National Training and Employment Project (NTEP) is implemented through cooperation with both the public and private sectors, and aims to alleviate poverty and unemployment among young Jordanians. It provides training and recruitment for young job seekers with funding from the E-TVET Fund. The target age group is 18–36 years (both males and females) at different education levels, though there is a particular focus on school leavers. Young people with special needs are also included. Some 13 500 trainees were registered at the start of the programme and by June 2009 over 4 000 had completed their training and found employment.

Training initiatives also target a number of sectors, including the textile industries; nursing (male nurses only); IT and communications engineering; hotel services; sales; electronic and electrical appliances; metal and wood product industries; and agriculture. It is also possible to organise courses for any other services for which skilled employees are needed. The programmes last from three to six months, and take place both in training centres and on the job. Enterprises that participate are required to sign a contract for a minimum of one year to provide an internship following completion of the training, in order to give work experience to the qualified trainee. There are incentives for the trainees in terms of the wages (not less than the standard minimum wage rate for employed workers at the same skill level), a transport allowance, social security and healthcare.

One specific sector on which the NTEP is focused is construction, for which there is an objective to train and employ 30 000 civilians and military staff in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and the private sector. The initiative is called NET (National Employment and Training), and it is funded through the E-TVET Fund, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Labour and the private sector, with in-kind contributions from the military. During the programme the trainees are considered as employees and receive a wage. Two groups of trainees qualified in 2009, one in June (2 684 graduated out of 4 000 recruited) and one in October (2 591 graduated out of 3 600 recruited). Support for this initiative is being provided by a French company, the Regional Centre for Local Development, Training and Job-Integration of Young People (Centre régional pour le développement local, la formation et l'insertion des jeunes (CREDIJ)), which is training the trainers, developing the curriculum and evaluating the trainers and trainees. This is an example of cooperation with a foreign non-profit organisation that delivers specialist skills and expertise. The certificates are awarded by CREDIJ, which is accredited by the French Ministry of Education. NET is being monitored for certification for ISO 9001.

Another initiative in Jordan is the Satellite Units Initiative managed by NTEP. These production units are established in cooperation with investors, particularly for labour-intensive industries, to provide work experience for unemployed young people. The scheme provides the production site, subsidises workers' wages and covers the cost of social security, meals, pre-training and transportation. The investor covers the equipment and machines, the running costs, training on the job, management staff, the non-subsidised part of the wages, and also registration for social security, healthcare and transportation. A contract of at least two years' duration is signed after the initial eighteen-month training period.

The Leather Manufacturing Committee in Syria runs a sector-specific programme in the Aleppo area to provide training for unemployed individuals and disadvantaged adults, including those with special needs, and to provide semi-skilled workers for the sector. The training is competence based, and targets men aged 16–35 years and orphans. It lasts for three months, after which the trainees are assessed by the Leather Manufacturing Committee and the staff of the training centre. The training is recognised by the leather sector.

In summary, training is focused on young people (children and young adults) from the end of compulsory schooling to the age of around 30. Programmes are offered for all education levels, though there is a particular emphasis on labour market integration for graduates. Most of the courses last a few months, though some are linked to internship or recruitment programmes. The programmes do not focus on additional qualifications but on giving school leavers and higher education graduates the competences they need to enter the labour market or to set up their own businesses. Programmes for higher education graduates and school leavers are developed in all of the countries included in the study.

## 4.5 OTHER ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES

This section includes detailed examples of how the national systems for providing training for unemployed people and those who are out of the labour market are set up and function in three of the countries, namely Morocco for the Maghreb, and Syria and Jordan for the Mashrek.

In Morocco there are different types of training for three categories of unemployed people:

- job seekers who have qualifications;
- adults who do not have functional literacy;
- young people who are still within the age group for compulsory education, but who are not in school.

One of the characteristics of the Moroccan labour market is the high level of unemployment among individuals with a higher education degree. One of the objectives of the public employment policy is to remedy this situation. A number of programmes have been established by the public employment service, the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (Agence nationale de promotion de l'emploi et des compétences – ANAPEC), to support labour market integration.

- MOUKAWALATI: aims to encourage self-employment for unemployed graduates through supporting enterprise creation and providing support to existing businesses.
- IDMAJ: aims to help graduates to obtain their first job in the private sector.
- TAEHIL: improves the employability of unemployed graduates through training, either to fill positions for which employers cannot find suitable candidates, or to undertake conversion training for a different employment field. Both types of training receive state funding. The training is implemented by external providers, namely public training centres, higher education institutions or private training providers accredited or approved by ANAPEC.

The aim of these programmes was to improve the employability of 50 000 job seekers during the period 2006–08. However, by the end of 2008 only around half this target number had benefited from the training. The job integration rate of those beneficiaries was over 75%, and almost half were university graduates. In order to increase the number of beneficiaries, ANAPEC has set up a regional programme of needs analysis in order to assess the skill needs of enterprises in different regions. The aim of all these activities is to give graduates the competences they need in order to integrate into the labour market.

Jordan addresses the issue of unemployment mainly through its National Agenda. The first phase (2007–12) is focused on reducing the number of people who are currently unemployed, of whom 60% have, at best, the secondary school leaving certificate (*Tawjihi*). The second phase (2013–17) will focus on increasing the average income and the third (2018 onwards) on transforming economic sectors with a view to moving towards the creation of a knowledge economy. Hence, in the first phase there is a focus on ensuring that vocational training responds to the needs of the labour market through upgrading skills, replacing imported labour with qualified local labour, and restructuring the TVET sector.

In Syria training for unemployed people is undertaken by the Public Corporation for Employment and Enterprise Development (PCEED) and Superior Knowledge by Intensive Labour Learning Schemes (SKILLS).

PCEED supports training, business incubation, SME development and programmes for women. It involves social partners from the business sectors, the chambers, the banking sector and the NGO sector. All the programmes supported must provide training in order to continue to receive support. The programmes cooperate with various international organisations and donors. Training is free of charge. Information on the programmes is frequently provided through job fairs, and the only condition for participants is that they must be aged 20–55. The duration of programmes varies between one week and six months. The curricula are competence based, and the assessment is usually undertaken by the employer, after which trainees receive an attendance certificate. There is no recognition of prior learning, and trainees are expected to attend the whole course.

SKILLS is a scheme established by the Syrian Education and Business Centre (SEBC) and the ETF to provide training for unemployed higher education graduates. The programme aims to facilitate job creation and to provide enterprises with the skills they need. It works in partnership with SMEs, private companies and the chambers. Funding is provided by the SEBC so the trainees do not pay fees. The main fields covered are management, the English language and computer training; on-the-job training is also provided, depending on the enterprise. The programme is aimed at 18–25-year-olds who have completed secondary school and have a minimum level of English. Selection is by interview, and the programmes, which are competence based, last for one year, after which there is a six-month period of on-the-job training. This type of training is widely recognised within the business sector, and prior learning is recognised through the assessment. Participants progress from the scheme into employment. The quality of the training is assured by the SEBC and the ETF.

In summary, these four initiatives focus on the key populations already identified. The majority of the training provision is targeted at those aged under 35 years, and there is a strong focus on preparing graduates for employment through different types of scheme, which in some cases are linked to recruitment. Training is also targeted at beneficiaries who left secondary school and at those who did not complete basic education. There is a mixture of public and private sector involvement. Despite the observation in the country reports that the activity rate of women is lower than that of men, and despite an increase in young female graduates, no programmes that specifically target young women (school leavers or higher education graduates) were noted.

## 4.6 SECTOR-BASED INITIATIVES

In all the countries concerned there are sector-based initiatives that are either organised by the state to address the needs of particular sectors, or organised by specific sectors themselves. Most of these programmes predominantly target young people, though often the focus is on developing skills for a particular type of employment or sector.

In Egypt the Training Organisation of Housing and Reconstruction (TOMOHAR) focuses on construction skills and targets 15–45-year-olds. Training is undertaken in vocational training centres according to the skill requirements of the region. Courses last for four months, with trainees obtaining an attendance certificate. The training also allows workers to obtain the licence they now need to practise skilled trades, a development that arose out of the National Skills Standards Project.

In Jordan there are two initiatives that are worthy of note, namely the programmes run by the Agricultural Engineering Association and by the Private Hospital Association.

The Agricultural Engineering Association offers a programme for newly qualified agricultural engineers, giving them the practical training they need in order to integrate into the sector and perform effectively. The long-term goal is to create more opportunities for recent graduates in the private sector and thus contribute to reducing unemployment, including for female graduates. The project also seeks to support the agricultural sector by providing qualified staff. The number of trainees during the period 2000–06 was 1 380. It offers a number of courses, such as marketing, computing and communications. The programmes last six months and the trainees receive a salary.

The Private Hospital Association runs the Nursing Employment and Training Programme to train male nurses who have recently graduated from university but who are unable to find work, as fewer male nurses than female nurses are recruited. The programme started in 2008 and to date 417 male nurses have been trained through on-the-job training, for which they receive a salary (half of which is reimbursed by the Nursing Employment and Training Programme).

In Lebanon the National Employment Office provides skills training, training for unemployed people and retraining in various fields including industrial trades, car repair, air conditioning, nursery work, ticketing and reservations, hairdressing, restaurant trades and construction trades. Applicants must hold Lebanese nationality, be over 14 years of age, have the appropriate level of education for the type of employment concerned, and fulfil health conditions where necessary. The training is free of charge and transport costs are covered. There is no evaluation of the curricula or training process, and there appears to have been a decrease in the uptake of these courses.

The ILO funds activities in Lebanon, including a training initiative in the Nahr El Bared Palestinian refugee camp in the north of the country as part of the reconstruction process. Training covers both the construction sector and the business sector. The courses organised include:

- short-cycle employment-oriented vocational courses for unemployed young people and job seekers in the priority construction industry;
- business management training, provision of equipment and access to micro finance.

The funding also aims to reinforce the capacity of the employment authority and the job centres to assist job seekers.

## 4.7 HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

At the other end of the spectrum, higher education institutions in Lebanon manage a number of initiatives that target, among other beneficiaries, unemployed individuals. The Continuing Education Centre of the American University of Beirut has provided courses for professional development for since 1995. These include:

- certificate and diploma programmes in a range of sectors such as accounting, finance, marketing and human resource management;
- computer studies;

- the Vocational and Technical Education Certificate, which is a new certificate aimed at helping those working in vocational and technical education to be more professional.

They also offer a vast range of programmes covering, for example, nutrition, health, graphic design and management, as well as corporate management programmes. The programmes can lead to formal certificates and diplomas or to attendance certificates. Notre Dame University, through its Continuing Education Department, also offers courses for individuals in business, computer skills and English for business. Courses are grouped into programmes, and there is an opportunity for participants to obtain a certificate on completion. AMIDEAST also offers training programmes for both employed and unemployed individuals, including business studies, communication, English and conflict resolution.

These programmes have been included in this report as interesting examples of the role of higher education institutions. Other examples are included in Chapter 5, since there is obvious overlap between programmes that mainly target unemployed people with a high level of education and those that can be followed by individuals on their own initiative.

## 4.8 OBSTACLES

The country reports highlight a number of obstacles in relation to the training of adults who are unemployed or out of the labour market.

Kreitem (2010) points out that despite the fact that there is a significant need, the various programmes for unemployed people in Morocco are of low quality, especially the literacy programmes, which have great difficulties in keeping adults engaged in learning. Only around half the numbers registered on the programmes actually take the exam at the end.

Moreover, there is a lack of monitoring and of sufficient information about employment training for qualified young people who are unemployed, so it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the programmes, despite substantial funds having been invested. The procedures to register as unemployed are considered long and complex, and this can discourage providers from proposing subsidised programmes. There have also been cases of providers selecting applicants who have already been recruited into employment. Furthermore, the objective of labour market integration may not be achieved, given that in some cases trainees have been dismissed before the end of the programme. There are also cases of trainees dropping out of programmes because they are not receiving help with transport.

In Syria, since many people prefer to work in the public rather than the private sector, individuals may be declared unemployed when in fact they are working. The country report suggests that many people do not consider that they need training once they have left school, and enterprises are not prepared to introduce professional on-the-job training. Other obstacles include:

- a lack of professional trainers;
- limited funding for training;
- the migration of nomadic Bedouin tribes, which leads individuals to drop out of literacy classes;
- the fact that many adult learners will not attend classes during the agricultural season.

Since individual status is linked to type of employment, the Egyptian country report suggests that it may appear preferable to be unemployed rather than in the 'wrong' job. (This is similar to the Syrian situation regarding the public sector.) According to the Egyptian country report, training in the country tends to be supply driven, and leads to mismatches in the labour market. It also tends to be institution driven, rather than driven by labour market requirements, though various initiatives in recent years have addressed curriculum issues, particularly through donor-assisted projects.

Finally, the low level of training provision for adult learning is a reflection of the generally low levels of education and training in a region where most countries are failing to meet social and economic demand (ETF, 2010a–e). Poverty levels in the region are hindering the development of a real market for adult learning, except in Egypt, where students need to supplement poor-quality initial training, and where a parallel system of learning has therefore developed, funded by families. The absence of evaluation of active labour market measures (except for the tracer studies carried out in Morocco and Tunisia) reinforces the short-sightedness of public policies. There have been many attempts to create observatories in the region (as Tunisia has done), and these should be resumed in the light of this situation.

## 4.9 MAIN ISSUES

In all the countries concerned, young people at all education levels have been a major focus for the adult education and training that is provided for unemployed people. With some variations between the countries, the specific groups for which training is provided are:

- young people who have completed higher education but need additional skills training in order to find employment, e.g. in Morocco, Jordan, Syria (with private sector collaboration);
- young people who left school at the end of secondary education or who did not complete secondary school, e.g. in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon (for Palestinians);
- children who did not complete (or, in some cases, did not even start) primary education, e.g. in Egypt, Morocco.

Literacy programmes for unemployed individuals exist in all the countries. The important target groups for literacy courses are women (since their literacy rates are lower than those for men in all the countries concerned), adults and children in rural areas, and (in some countries) nomadic people. Skills training programmes depend on functional literacy, and in some cases programmes for literacy and basic employment skills or other life and social skills are linked.

Except in Tunisia, much of the training for unemployed people, whatever their age, does not lead to a recognised diploma or certificate. The durations and types of courses vary from short labour market integration courses lasting a few months to longer courses leading to a qualification. In Jordan, VTC training leads to certificates at specific levels, providing opportunities for progression for trainees.

One of the issues raised is the number of ministries that have a responsibility for training for their sector, e.g. 22 in Egypt. This results in a multiplicity of procedures, provision and outcomes.

In some countries there is a mechanism in place to collect funds from enterprises to fund training for unemployed individuals. This is the case in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Part of this goes into mutualised funds to cover training needs of unemployed people.

For individuals who register for courses, there are many obstacles to completing training. For example, some drop out because transport costs are not covered, because their way of life is nomadic, or because they need to work during the agricultural season. As has frequently been observed in European countries since the 1980s, there is a need to adapt education and training provision for adults, and especially for those in disadvantaged groups, in order to include the necessary social and personal support that will allow individuals to enrol, follow and complete programmes.

## 5. EDUCATION AND TRAINING UNDERTAKEN ON INDIVIDUALS' OWN INITIATIVE

For this chapter the authors of the country reports were asked to provide significant illustrations, but not to attempt an exhaustive overview. Most of the data are descriptive and examine the provision of courses or programmes. There is inevitably a certain amount of overlap with the previous chapters of this report, since the boundaries between the different categories are not rigid.

### 5.1 NON-FORMAL LEARNING

This type of learning exists in all the countries concerned. As in many other countries, it frequently covers foreign language and IT courses, but also a range of vocational courses and business studies. Such courses are more often available in urban areas and tend to serve a population that already has a certain level of education. This is the case, for example, in Egypt, Syria and Morocco. In most cases individuals pay for the training themselves, though in some countries, for example Morocco, those who are employed may be able to have the cost covered by their employers. Information is available from institutions or from various websites, and in all cases, quality assurance is achieved through the procedures that are in place in the institutions offering the courses. Short courses may be recognised by employers, but have no formal recognition. However, there may be implicit recognition if the course is provided by a recognised organisation such as the British Council or the Goethe-Institut, or by an IT company such as IBM or Microsoft, or if it leads to the ICDL.

The first example is Tunisia, where training is available to individuals who wish to improve their competences and their recognised qualifications through the following institutions.

- *Virtual University of Tunis*: This was established in 2002 to develop on-line programmes for Tunisian universities. It currently offers eight programmes, of which four are at Master's level. All the programmes are recognised by the Ministry of Higher Education and serve a diverse public who are registered in either initial or continuing education. Students pay for these courses, the fees being considerably higher than registration fees for initial courses in universities.
- *Institut Bourguiba des langues vivantes*: This institute is attached to the University of Tunis and offers language courses for adults in a number of different languages at 15 different centres. Around 6 000 students register every year. They pay for their courses, and at the end of a full cycle of four years they receive an attendance certificate.
- *Institut de la promotion supérieure du travail*: There are five such institutes situated in the main cities. They are public sector centres and operate under the CNFCPP. Their mission is to organise training and retraining programmes to enable adults to improve their level of education and develop their competences, and to prepare them to pass vocational diplomas and continue into higher education. Trainees pay for the courses, which are delivered in the evening and through distance learning. The diplomas are the same as those in initial training, and lead to recognised qualifications at four levels, from technician to engineer.
- *Programme national d'enseignement des adultes*: This programme focuses on literacy and it is free of charge.

The education and training provided covers all fields, including vocational courses, higher education, foreign languages and literacy. However, in all cases the number of adults registered is lower than the targets set, as is the number of qualifications awarded.

The second example of non-formal learning under ministry responsibility comes from Jordan, where non-formal learning includes programmes provided by the Ministry of Education and Community Learning Centres. There are 285 centres across Jordan that are licensed by the Ministry of Education to issue certificates for a wide range of courses, which are offered to both male and female trainees, who cover their own training costs. Ministry of Education programmes include courses for adults who did not complete school, and literacy programmes. These come under the National Strategy for Non-Formal Education. 'Eliminating Illiteracy' is a major national programme that is divided into two phases, each lasting 16 months, after which the learner receives a certificate equivalent to the sixth grade. There are 473 centres across the country, but only 27 for males, since the illiteracy rate is much higher among the female population. Over 6 000 learners are currently registered, of whom 5 500 are women. Other programmes are provided through home learning, which is designed to encourage self-study. Learners study at home, but take the regular school exams. There are also evening classes and programmes that target young early school leavers.

The ICT sector in Lebanon provides an interesting example of a sector in which many NGOs are active in offering training, including outreach, for example to disadvantaged groups, displaced persons, and people in the regions. The sector works through public–private partnerships in order to reduce upfront costs and offer the best technical and management skills. There are two training programmes of this type.

- Project ICT Academy provides fully equipped and staffed technical centres to help local people connect to the internet through a wide variety of courses and seminars, which are provided at low cost and for which certificates are issued.
- PCA Internet Point of Presence was initiated to address the 'digital divide' and to ensure access to ICT and the acquisition of computer skills to people in all regions of Lebanon in order to create, among other things, better professional opportunities. There are currently over 40 centres operating.

In summary, this type of learning covers a wide range of skills, mainly soft skills. It focuses on adult lifelong learning and includes a variety of learning activities that are formal or non-formal, including courses provided by private training centres, for example for foreign languages, IT and other specific skills. It also includes courses organised by universities. In Tunisia and Morocco this type of learning can be part of a progression pathway.

## 5.2 FURTHER EDUCATION

In most of the countries there is an offer for further education that is based on either universities in the country or cooperation with foreign universities. In some cases the programmes are run through distance learning. 'Open' universities have also established programmes.

In Lebanon the Arab Open University offers higher education to adults through face-to-face courses in four degree programmes: English language, ICT, business studies and computer studies. Distance learning is not offered, though there are a variety of support media available to students, including CD-ROMs, on-line materials and websites. In Egypt there are also higher education courses that in some cases can be taken through distance learning. There are also many examples of foreign universities providing distance-learning courses. The students/trainees in Egypt either fund their own education or receive a scholarship from the government or an NGO. Entry requirements and duration will vary according to whether they are formal higher education courses, or short language or other courses.

The Moroccan report highlights the opportunities that exist to obtain qualifications from foreign higher education institutions. This is a fast-developing sector that is market led, which raises the issue of ministry control (Kreitem, 2010). Programmes are offered by public or private higher education institutions and are based on a partnership between a foreign and a Moroccan higher education institution. Such courses have existed for around 20 years, and most are at Master's level. The issue for the individuals who obtain these degrees is that although they may be recognised in the labour market, they are not recognised by the Moroccan state. Other continuing training programmes have also been established recently by Moroccan universities that lead to a university degree, but not to a state-recognised degree. There is a need to ensure that all continuing education courses offered by Moroccan universities are relevant and that the universities have the capacity to deliver them, but there are no data about these types of training.

Open (higher) education also exists in Syria. It was introduced in 2001 to provide flexible higher education for the increasing number of secondary school leavers. All universities can provide open access, and the funding comes both from the funding for universities and from the fees paid by students. Access is open to all secondary school diploma holders, and quality assurance is the responsibility of the Ministry of Higher Education. In addition, the Syrian Virtual University was established in 2002 and is fully accredited and endorsed by the Ministry of Higher Education to provide international degrees and the programmes of American, European, Australian and Canadian partners, as well as programmes developed by the Syrian Virtual University itself. It also provides continuing education for Ministry of Education staff. The programmes are at Bachelor's and Master's levels in engineering, economics and human sciences, and funding comes from fees paid by students. Access is open to the general public, though it tends to be limited by the number of access centres, as all exams have to be conducted in these centres. Quality is assured through strict procedures.

In summary, the issues raised by the authors of the country reports are in part those created by the internationalisation of higher education in the Arab region through the programmes and degrees proposed by foreign universities alone or in cooperation with local universities. The issues relate to the market focus of the initiatives, quality assurance and the future recognition of the qualifications, both nationally and internationally. The second major issue is that of opening up sufficient access to higher education in order to respond to a growing demand, including from adults.

## 5.3 SECTOR-SPECIFIC SKILLS

In Jordan there are several sector-based initiatives that allow adults to improve their skills. They include the Business Development Centre, the Engineers Training Centre, the Garment Design and Training Services Centre, the National Institute for Specialised Nursing, the Sustainable Training Centre and the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Professional Training Academy. These initiatives aim to produce individuals with better skill levels for particular sectors. In the case of the Business Development Centre, they support SMEs to work more effectively on the regional and international market. Clients who enrol in the different programmes may be employed or unemployed, and come from either the public or private sector. In some cases the training is supported by a national programme: for example, training at the Garment Design and Training Services Centre is supported by the E-TVET Fund.

## 5.4 PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN

One report (Jordan) mentions programmes that specifically target women (outside of literacy programmes). These are run by several institutions, including the Jordanian Fund for Human Development, the Queen Zein Al Sharaf Institute for Development and the Jordanian National Commission for Women. These programmes cover a broad range of subjects, including personal skills, employability training, self-employment skills, ICT training and English language training.

## 5.5 RECOGNITION OF LEARNING

Recognition of learning is clearly an area of concern for the authors of all the country reports. The exception is for education and training courses that lead to formal qualifications, which is more likely to be the case in the public sector, for example in the three Maghreb countries. In Egypt too there are education and training opportunities for adults in employment who wish to obtain a qualification through the formal education system. They can also undertake training that does not lead to a recognised qualification, and most training leads to attendance certificates. This mirrors the situation in the private sector in most of the countries, where trainees usually obtain only a certificate of attendance. However, as Al-Jouni (2010) points out, if the training is relevant to the sector needs, then there will be de facto recognition in the labour market. This raises the issue of the recognition of non-formal education and training, possibly within a reference framework, in order to provide real progression opportunities for individual employees. Such reference frameworks are likely to be in the form of national qualifications frameworks, though regional frameworks such as the European Qualifications Framework also have a role to play as incentives in relation to mobility and transparency.

In Morocco legislation is being developed to introduce validation of prior learning and a national qualifications framework, both of which are being tested in pilot sectors, namely construction and textiles/clothing. In each case the piloting is being carried out for specific employment fields and trades. Given the lack of statistical data on training activities, it is currently difficult to estimate how much progression actually takes place as a result of training.

The report on recognition of qualifications in the Mediterranean region (Leney, 2009, p. 43), quotes Yousif (2009) on the absence of viable national strategies for dealing with adult education:

‘The quality of provision is generally low. There are various reasons given. Some relate to the social and economic conditions of learners; but the major deficit is attributed to inputs and processes, including untrained and unremunerated teachers, substandard facilities, one-size-fits-all curricula, didactic methodology, little application of ICTs, and no effective mechanism of quality control, benchmarking or regular monitoring and evaluation. There is an increasing obsession with numbers – how many come to classes and how many stay till the end. There is not much concern about whether those who stay have really learned something, or for what purpose they use what they have learned.’

This assessment is equally relevant to initial and continuing education in the region, to deficiencies in the recognition of knowledge and skills acquired through those programmes, and to the weak links with, and absence of pathways to, formal education and training.

## 5.6 MAIN ISSUES

With regard to non-formal learning, in all the countries concerned there appears to be a growing number of private training centres offering courses in IT, foreign languages and management or business skills, as well as in vocational skills. As in many other countries, such training leads to an attendance certificate or one awarded by an international body, company or programme (e.g. CISCO, ICDL), and although these are not recognised within the national system, they may be very useful for gaining or retaining employment. Several country reports mentioned the lack of any quality control or monitoring of this type of provision. Literacy programmes for the general public exist in all the countries, and are described in more detail in Chapter 4. It is worth mentioning here that funding is available for initiatives implemented by NGOs or in Community Centres (e.g. in Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco).

Higher education institutions offer a range of courses to adults, at either diploma or degree level. Some of these can be undertaken through distance learning and an open university approach (e.g. in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia). There has been an increase in the number of further education programmes on offer, including those by foreign universities. One of the issues raised is whether and how countries can ensure the quality of such courses and also keep down the cost to students. Higher education undertaken through adult continuing provision may cost considerably more than the same course for a student registered in initial higher education. Three major issues need to be addressed: the recognition of the qualifications obtained; quality assurance; and some regulation of the development of a market place for higher education qualifications.

Specific courses are offered for women, including literacy and a range of skills such as training in IT, employment skills and language training (for example in Jordan). Given the declared need to improve the activity rate of women in the formal labour market, it is surprising that there are not more dedicated courses.

# 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1 CONCLUSIONS

The majority of workers in the region (60–70%) have only primary education or less, which creates a substantial challenge for continuing education and training systems in terms of their ability to support economic and social development adequately. While on the one hand girls are performing increasingly well in education systems, on the other the literacy rate for women in the region is lower than that for men, and more girls than boys do not go to school, or leave early. Improving the literacy rate for children and adults remains a concern and will have an influence on priorities for adult learning, since it affects both the absolute literacy rates and functional literacy for skills training. Significant efforts are still needed – and are currently under way – to organise adult education for women with a view to supporting their personal development, as well as the economic and social development of their communities. The importance of girls' and women's education (literacy) as a pillar of human development and social progress has been amply demonstrated.

In all these countries there is a political commitment to adult learning that focuses on social and economic development needs. An important element is raising the literacy levels and eradicating illiteracy. However, most of the authors of the country reports suggest that the provision and the uptake of education and training for adults is limited, in terms of both quantity and quality, for a variety of reasons. These reasons range from an underdeveloped learning culture, both in enterprises and on the part of individuals, to the existence of complex regulations and procedures in relation to grants and subsidies. One of the difficulties appears to relate to the effective implementation of existing measures, initiatives and funding procedures. There is a lack of high-quality, regular data that can be used to assess implementation and results, as few statistical data are collected on training. Furthermore, data are collected by different types of institutions, bodies and providers, making it very difficult to obtain an overall and reliable perspective.

Although it is always difficult to characterise systems in a summary report, in the countries of the Maghreb adult education and training appears to be more government led, while in the countries of the Mashrek it tends to be led more by enterprises and sectors. Funding mechanisms have been established in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia requiring enterprises to pay a training levy, which may be collected through special funds or used by enterprises to fund training directly. In all these countries it is generally the case that human resource development and training are implemented more widely in the public sector than in the private sector. There is a clear link between the social and economic strategies developed and the education and training provision as regards the measures and initiatives introduced to support education and training for employment. There are some similarities in the priorities among the countries, especially concerning access to employment for young people and literacy, though the latter is a more critical problem in some countries, for example Morocco and Egypt. In some key sectors and large enterprises there appears to be a strong link between the identification of skills for economic development and human resource development plans. In many cases, this is linked to improving graduate employment, which is a major issue in all of the countries, given the increasing number of higher education graduates entering the labour market. The transition from secondary (and even primary) school to work is also a priority, given the high percentage of very young people in the population.

The country reports suggest that training is more prevalent in large companies than in small enterprises. There is also the question of whether funding instruments effectively cover all categories of enterprises, as well as the problem of the complicated procedures for accessing funding (especially in the Maghreb countries). It is clear that these instruments do not cover the informal sector, thus reducing the opportunity for individuals working in this sector to benefit from training. Furthermore, there is clearly a need to raise awareness among SMEs about the advantages of training. In some countries where funding support is available, the procedures may be complex, and could discourage small firms from applying; this is not conducive to the development of a culture of training. Employers are hesitant about engaging in training, as they fear that employees could be poached, and do not see training as an investment. There are, of course, dynamic, key sectors that have well-structured training provision as part of the human resource development measures for the sector.

The different Chambers of Commerce, Trades, Industry and Agriculture play an important role at local level, for example in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, in structuring training provision for SMEs in different sectors. Sector bodies are also important for stimulating training in some of the countries.

For employees there is a lack of information and guidance, and there may be little incentive to train in terms of career and salary progression. Many employees do not recognise the benefits of training, and those with family responsibilities or a second job to increase their income could find it difficult to attend courses outside working hours. E-learning is not yet sufficiently developed to be a valid alternative to face-to-face training.

The lengths and outcomes of training (type of award, progression, etc.) vary considerably among and within these countries. In general the most common outcome is for attendance certificates to be awarded. This raises the issue of the recognition of non-formal education and training, possibly within a national qualifications framework or similar mechanism (e.g. register). This would begin to put in place opportunities for individual employees to progress by building on their qualification level. There are few formal quality assurance mechanisms in place. In fact, the most effective one appears to be the labour market itself.

In all the countries concerned, young people at all education levels are a major focus for adult education and training for unemployed individuals. Given the high percentage of young people in the population and the numbers entering the labour market every year, the need is great. With some variations between the countries, the specific groups that receive training are:

1. young people who have completed higher education but need additional skills training in order to find employment, e.g. in Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia and Syria (with private sector collaboration);
2. young people who left school at the end of secondary education or who did not complete secondary school, e.g. in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon (for Palestinians);
3. children who did not complete (or in some cases did not even start) primary education, e.g. in Egypt and Morocco.

Literacy programmes for unemployed people exist in all these countries. The important target groups for literacy courses are women (since their literacy rates are lower than those for men in all the countries concerned), adults and children in rural areas, and nomadic people in some of the countries. Skills training programmes depend on functional literacy, and in some cases programmes for literacy are linked to training in basic employment skills or other life and social skills. One such example exists in Jordan, where courses organised for women include literacy and also a range of training in areas such as IT, employment skills and language training. In addition to the state, NGOs and international funds support efforts to eradicate illiteracy. Given the declared need to improve the activity rate of women in the formal labour market, it is surprising that there are not more dedicated courses.

Much of the training for unemployed people, whatever their age, does not lead to recognised qualifications. Two exceptions are training provided in Tunisia and by the VTC in Jordan. The durations and types of courses vary greatly, ranging from short labour market integration courses of a few months to longer courses leading to a qualification.

For individuals there are many obstacles to completing training. For example, they drop out of courses because transport costs are not covered, because of their nomadic way of life or because they need to work during the agricultural season. As has frequently been observed in European countries since the 1980s, education and training for adults, especially for those in disadvantaged groups, needs to be adapted to include the necessary social and personal support to allow individuals to enrol, follow and complete programmes.

In all the countries concerned there appears to be a growing number of private training centres that offer courses in IT, foreign languages and management or business skills, as well as in vocational skills. As in many other countries, such courses lead to an attendance certificate or one awarded by an international body, company or programme (e.g. CISCO, ICDL), but they are not recognised within the national system, although they may be very useful for finding or retaining employment. One issue that was raised several times is the lack of any quality control or monitoring of this type of provision.

Higher education institutions offer an ever-increasing number and range of courses for adults. These are either diploma or degree courses, which in some cases are taken through distance learning and an open university approach. There has also been an increase in the number of higher education programmes organised by foreign universities. One of the questions raised is how these countries can ensure the quality of such courses. Higher education undertaken through adult continuing provision may cost considerably more than the same course for a student registered in initial higher education. Three major issues need to be addressed: the recognition of the qualifications obtained; quality assurance; and the need for regulation of the development of a market place for higher education qualifications.

## 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is difficult to make very specific recommendations that are relevant across the region on the basis of this first set of country reports on adult education in seven of the Mediterranean partner countries, despite the fact that they contain rich and detailed information about national adult learning provision. This section puts forward suggestions for addressing what appear to be some of the most crucial issues.

One major problem is the lack of regular, structured information and data on adult learning. It has not been possible in this summary report to provide quantitative data that can be compared across countries. There is no regular collection of data about the uptake of adult learning measures in all of these countries. This hinders the evaluation of the

effectiveness of measures. Moreover, there is no information available on whether or not training for employment does in fact lead to employment, and whether or not the employment is sustainable. There is a need, which is highlighted by some of the authors of the country reports, to establish regular impact studies, and processes for monitoring and evaluating provision and measures. It is suggested that an exploration should be carried out with the partner countries into how best to improve information systems both upstream and downstream of the education and training provision. This includes the need for better, regular information, both quantitative and qualitative, about current and future skill requirements in order to ensure that adult education responds to real needs. This can be achieved with the partner countries, by drawing on the expertise of the public sector and of sector bodies and Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Trades and Agriculture and all other relevant stakeholders.

Ensuring that existing policies are effectively implemented appears to be a substantial difficulty. It is suggested that future work on adult education in the region should use peer learning approaches to share expertise and experience in dealing with the various challenges that need to be addressed, including regulations, attracting learners, information and data, and evaluation.

The most successful examples of training appear to be in well-structured sectors in which sector bodies take a lead in developing training, and in advising and assisting enterprises to develop and implement human resource development plans. This is also the case where the chambers are involved at local level. It is suggested that future work on adult education should develop peer learning approaches in which a wide range of stakeholders work together to share expertise and experience on continuing education and training in enterprises. However, the complexity of regulations and procedures reduces the number of enterprises that apply for support to organise training, where it exists. This indicates a need to review procedures and regulations with a view to making them more enabling and supportive of training rather than predominantly administrative and selective.

Furthermore, it is suggested in the reports that there is a real need for more awareness raising among enterprises about the advantages, uses and purposes of training, in order to increase the numbers of SMEs that organise training for their employees. There appear to be few incentives for individuals to request training in terms of career development and remuneration. It is recommended that awareness raising about adult education be included in peer learning activities.

It appears that there is little information for individuals, whatever their employment status, about education and training provision, outside the limited number of sectors and large companies that have well-developed approaches. There is clearly a need to develop instruments and tools for improving the information and counselling available to adults.

In addition to the classic obstacles and barriers that adults face with regard to training, there are some that are specific to the region. These include the difficulty of access for people in rural areas coupled with higher illiteracy rates in those areas, the fact that priority is given to agriculture during busy seasons, and the specific outreach needs of nomadic people. Programmes are under way in all the countries concerned to tackle these issues. Support in the form of transport costs for all learners who are not earning and child-care provision for women learners can be important elements that contribute to participation. Comparative impact studies to assess the qualitative as well as the quantitative outcomes of the policies and programmes would be of great interest.

Most of the adult learning described in the country reports leads to the awarding of attendance certificates only. There is a need to develop and test courses against occupational standards and to improve recognition mechanisms and pathways to encourage people to improve their learning. It is recommended that the proposed measures in the *European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning* be used as a starting point for reflection on building recognition systems in the Mediterranean partner countries. The work that is under way in Morocco and Tunisia could also provide a peer learning contribution.

# ANNEXES

## ANNEX 1 METHODOLOGY: QUESTIONS FOR THE DATA COLLECTION

In order to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the education and training provided, the reports were structured around a set of questions. Information was provided in the following categories, where the questions were relevant and the data available for the particular type of education and training.

1. *Funding*: How is each type of provision funded (e.g. public, private, enterprise, special measures and international cooperation)? Does the individual learner have to pay? Do they have access to a grant or other support and, if so, what does it cover?
2. *Access*: Who can benefit from this type of education/training? Is it limited to certain categories of the population or certain age groups? Are there data on the number of people (by gender and age group and/or other relevant category) who participate each year?
3. *Information and guidance*: Where can adults go to obtain information and guidance? Is it available to everyone?
4. *Institutions where education/training takes place*: Which institutions offer this type of education/training? Who is the provider? The education/training may be provided by a municipality or by a foreign aid project but take place in the local secondary school and/or private training centre. Please include work-based learning where relevant.
5. *Level*: What is the level of the education/training? Please use the categories that are relevant for your country to describe the level of the course or the certificate/diploma obtained or the employment targeted.
6. *Programme*: How long does the programme last? Is it a fixed duration? Does the learner have to complete the full number of hours before being assessed? Does a competence-based curriculum exist? Can the learner choose to be assessed without undertaking the training?
7. *Assessment*: Are the students/trainees assessed at the end of the programme? What body is responsible: ministry, Chamber of Commerce, sectoral body, enterprise, international organisation, other? What type of certificate do they obtain?
8. *Recognition*: Does the education/training lead to a formal certificate or diploma? If so, does it have official recognition? If not, is there any non-official recognition, e.g. in a company or sectoral agreement?
9. *Recognition and validation of prior learning*: Does this possibility exist for entry to the education/training? If so, how does it function? Is it a formal or informal procedure; formal or informal recognition?
10. *Progression and pathways*: Does this education/training given access to a higher level? What progression is possible?
11. *Open, distance and flexible learning*: Can this type of education or training be undertaken through e-learning? Or through another form of distance or flexible learning?
12. *Quality assurance*: What quality assurance measures are in place? Who is responsible (ministry, sector, awarding body, etc.)?
13. *Obstacles*: What are the main obstacles and barriers for adults who wish to undertake this type of education/training?

## ANNEX 2 DATA SOURCES FOR COUNTRY REPORTS

| Country        | Statistical tools/surveys                                                                                                                                                                                  | Data collected for the study                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Algeria</b> | No information provided                                                                                                                                                                                    | Existing reports and documentation                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Egypt</b>   | There are no specific surveys or statistics on adult learning                                                                                                                                              | Existing reports and studies<br>Questionnaire to key actors                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Jordan</b>  | No specific statistical tools mentioned                                                                                                                                                                    | Annual reports and websites<br>Interviews with key actors                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Lebanon</b> | Some data can be provided by the National Committee for Illiteracy and Adult Learning, but apart from that, no surveys about adult education have been carried out to date and no data are available       | Existing sources of data and reports<br>Literature search<br>Interviews with stakeholders                                                                                      |
| <b>Morocco</b> | Adult learning comes under several ministries and is the responsibility of a number of public and private institutions, so information is dispersed and collected separately by each body and organisation | Existing documents and statistics<br>Interviews with key actors                                                                                                                |
| <b>Syria</b>   | There are no specific statistics or surveys regarding adult education                                                                                                                                      | Existing studies, research and statistics<br>Questionnaires to ministries, training centres and enterprises<br>Interviews with key individuals in ministries and organisations |
| <b>Tunisia</b> | No information provided                                                                                                                                                                                    | Existing reports and documentation<br>Interviews with individuals responsible for the training system and institutions                                                         |

## ANNEX 3 MAIN POLICY DOCUMENTS ADDRESSING ADULT LEARNING BY COUNTRY

| Country        | Policy instrument                                                                                                               | Institution in charge                                                                               | Financial instrument                                                                                   | Purpose                                                                                                                                                                                   | Implementation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Algeria</b> |                                                                                                                                 | Several sectoral ministries                                                                         | FNAC                                                                                                   | Promotion of CVET and apprenticeship<br>Collection of training levy from enterprises<br>Manage the allocation of funding<br>Fund CVET training activities                                 | Little efficiency; the reskilling of people has not led to job placements                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Egypt</b>   | National strategy 'not defined in one unique document' (Torino Process Egypt)<br>TVET Strategy<br>National Strategic Plan       | Sectoral ministries and other public institutions, e.g. Social Fund for Development and HRD Council | Training Fund<br>Industrial Training Council<br>Building Skills Development Council<br>Tourism Council | Coordination and effectiveness in terms of the existing training project                                                                                                                  | CVET does not rank as a high priority<br>Awaiting the Supreme Council for Human Resources Development to be operational again                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Jordan</b>  | National Agenda (2006–15) and E-TVET sector reform document (2008)                                                              | E-TVET Council                                                                                      | E-TVET Fund                                                                                            | Improving the efficiency and quality of demand-driven, technical skills training in collaboration with the private sector                                                                 | E-TVET Fund currently heading towards huge deficits; unlikely to be able to reach its goals<br>Resources used on limited number of projects related to the Ministry of Labour (National Employment and Training, VTC) and often selected with an apparent lack of clarity (ETF, 2010b) |
| <b>Lebanon</b> | The Ministry of Education and Higher Education will engage in the development of a strategic framework for VTE in 2011          | VTE subsector of Ministry of Education and Higher Education<br>Ministry of Labour                   | NCIAE<br>National Employment Office                                                                    | Reducing illiteracy<br>Active labour market measures                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Morocco</b> | Charte nationale de l'éducation et de la formation<br>Pacte pour l'émergence industrielle (2009–15)<br>Plan d'urgence (2008–15) | Office de la formation professionnelle et de la promotion du travail (OFPPT)                        | Taxe de la formation professionnelle                                                                   | Reskilling of employees<br>Upskilling of employees<br>Training engineering/curricula development<br>Access to employment<br>Skills forecasting and initial VET training through the OFPPT | The Confédération générale des entreprises du Maroc is proposing an update of the tax for vocational training (taxe de la formation professionnelle) with a wider role for employers in the allocation of funds                                                                        |
| <b>Syria</b>   | Tenth 5-year Plan<br>VET Strategy<br>EU MVET Programme                                                                          | VET Council under Ministry of Education soon to be replaced with independent VET Authority          | Mainly PCEED                                                                                           | Training for unemployed individuals and for business development support                                                                                                                  | VET strategy still awaiting implementation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Tunisia</b> | Presidential Programme 2009–14                                                                                                  | Centre national de formation continue et de promotion professionnelle                               | FOPRAFA<br>FIAP A & D<br>FNE 21-21<br>PRONAFOC (replaced in 2009 by training vouchers)<br>Article 39   | Professional adaptation<br>ICT training<br>CVET in SMEs<br>Training<br>Training linked to investment in new technology                                                                    | Procedures are complex and not transparent, and SMEs are informed about what they can spend in training vouchers only three months after the end of the year                                                                                                                           |

# ACRONYMS

|               |                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ALI</b>    | Association of Lebanese Industrialists                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>ANAPEC</b> | Agence nationale de promotion de l'emploi et des compétences (National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills)                                                 |
| <b>ATFP</b>   | Agence tunisienne de la formation professionnelle (Tunisian Agency for Vocational Training)                                                                               |
| <b>CCIAB</b>  | Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut                                                                                                                   |
| <b>CNFCPP</b> | Centre national de formation continue et de promotion professionnelle (National Centre of Continuous Training and Vocational Promotion)                                   |
| <b>CREDIJ</b> | Centre régional pour le développement local, la formation et l'insertion des jeunes (Regional Centre for Local Development, Training and Job-integration of Young People) |
| <b>CSF</b>    | Contrats spéciaux de formation (special training contracts)                                                                                                               |
| <b>CVET</b>   | Continuing vocational education and training                                                                                                                              |
| <b>ERfKE</b>  | Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy                                                                                                                                |
| <b>ETE</b>    | Education and Training for Employment                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>ETF</b>    | European Training Foundation                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>E-TVET</b> | Employment-Technical and vocational education and training                                                                                                                |
| <b>EU</b>     | European Union                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>FIAP</b>   | Fonds d'insertion et d'adaptation professionnelle (Vocational Integration and Adaptation Fund)                                                                            |
| <b>FNAC</b>   | Fonds national de développement de l'apprentissage et de la formation continue (National Fund for the Development of Apprenticeship and Continuing Training)              |
| <b>FNE</b>    | Fonds national de l'emploi (National Employment Fund)                                                                                                                     |
| <b>GNP</b>    | Gross national product                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>ICDL</b>   | International Computer Driving Licence                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>ICT</b>    | Information and communication technology                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>ISO</b>    | International Organisation for Standardisation                                                                                                                            |
| <b>IT</b>     | Information technology                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>MBA</b>    | Master of Business Administration                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>MVET</b>   | Modernisation of Vocational Education and Training                                                                                                                        |
| <b>NCIAE</b>  | National Committee for Illiteracy and Adult Education                                                                                                                     |
| <b>NGO</b>    | Non-governmental organisation                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>NIT</b>    | National Institute for Training                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>NTEP</b>   | National Training and Employment Project                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>OECD</b>   | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development                                                                                                                     |

|               |                                                                                                                           |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>OFPPT</b>  | Office de la formation professionnelle et de la promotion du travail (Office of Vocational Training and Labour Promotion) |
| <b>PCEED</b>  | Public Corporation for Employment and Enterprise Development                                                              |
| <b>SEBC</b>   | Syrian Education and Business Centre                                                                                      |
| <b>SKILLS</b> | Superior Knowledge by Intensive Labour Learning Schemes                                                                   |
| <b>SME</b>    | Small and medium-sized enterprise                                                                                         |
| <b>TSS</b>    | Technical secondary school                                                                                                |
| <b>TVET</b>   | Technical and vocational education and training                                                                           |
| <b>UNDP</b>   | United Nations Development Programme                                                                                      |
| <b>UNESCO</b> | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation                                                          |
| <b>VTC</b>    | Vocational Training Corporation                                                                                           |

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## CONTACT US

Further information can be  
found on the ETF website:

**[www.etf.europa.eu](http://www.etf.europa.eu)**

For any additional information  
please contact:

European Training Foundation  
Communication Department  
Villa Gualino  
Viale Settimio Severo 65  
I – 10133 Torino

E [info@etf.europa.eu](mailto:info@etf.europa.eu)

F +39 011 630 2200

T +39 011 630 2222

